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The Presbyterian Record

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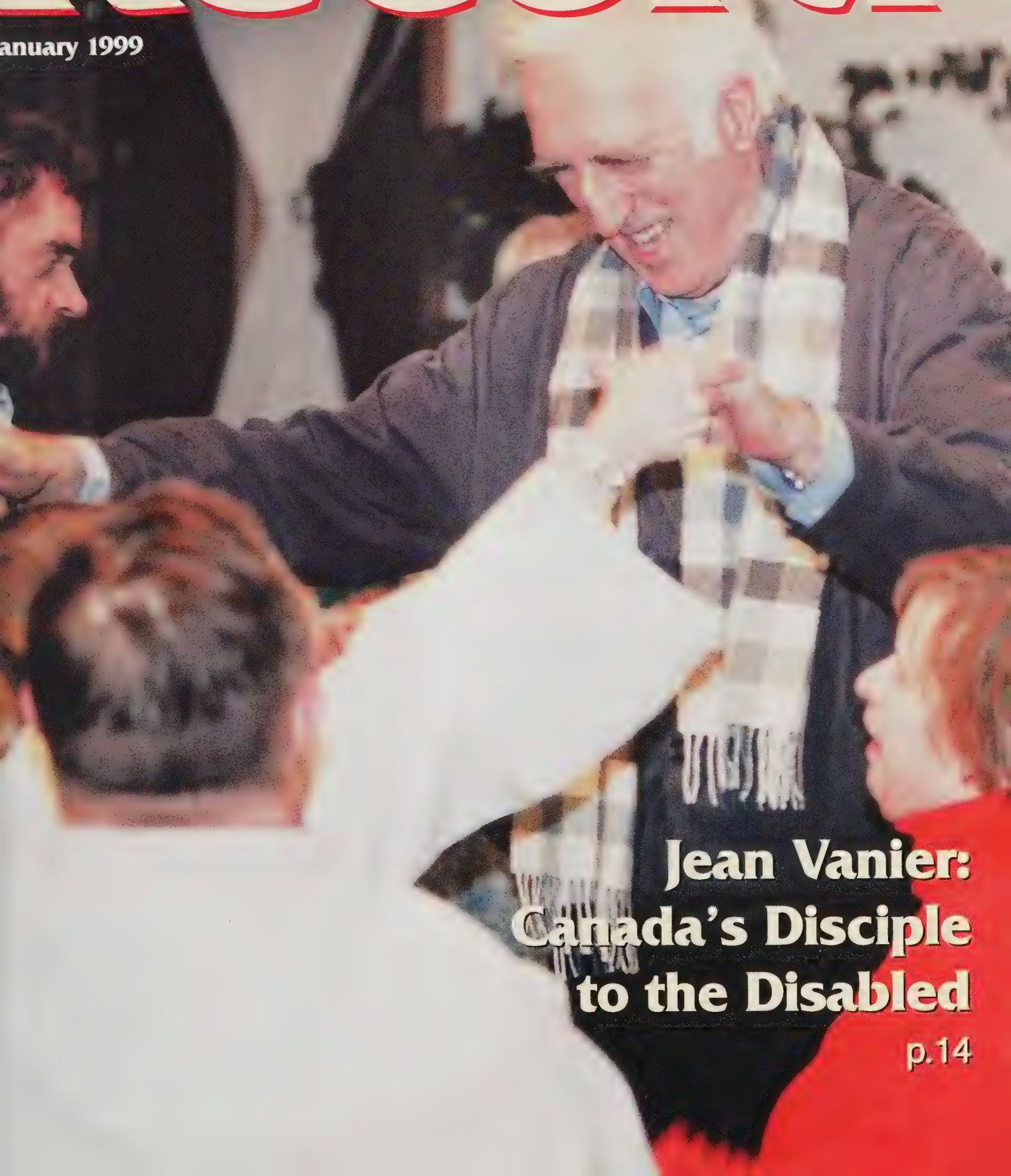
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PRESBYTERIAN Record

January 1999



**Jean Vanier:
Canada's Disciple
to the Disabled**

p.14

You Think You're Overworked!

During the course of his ministry in Geneva, lasting nearly 25 years, John Calvin lectured to theological students and preached an average of five sermons a week. This was in addition to writing a commentary on nearly every book of the Bible as well as numerous treatises on theological topics. His correspondence fills 11 volumes.

— *Christian History*

Circumstances and situations do colour life, but you have been given the mind to choose what the colour shall be.

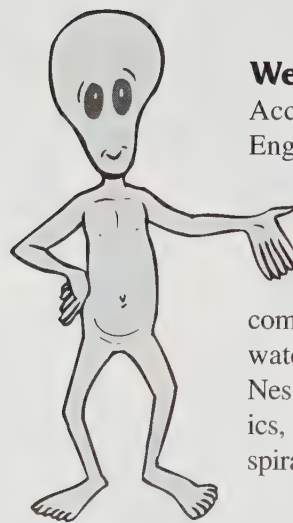
— John Homer Miller
(1722-1791)



New Year's

When I go, I'm going to take New Year's with me.

— Guy Lombardo, popular bandleader who, with his Royal Canadians, greeted the New Year from the main ballrooms of leading New York hotels



Weirdness

According to the *Fortean Times* of London, England, world-wide weirdness was up a full four per cent in the past year, the biggest jump since 1993. Increases were seen in most categories, including visits by aliens, instances of spontaneous human combustion, falls from the sky, and sightings of water monsters (due largely to a big jump in Nessie sightings). Also up were hoaxes and panics, ineptitude and stupidity, and cults and conspiracies. Dare we suggest the hand of El Niño?

— *The Old Farmer's 1999 Almanac*

The Collapse of Religion

On the matter of religion, we'd rather listen to a woman on the street than to God himself, whom we would suspect of promoting his own interests and resent for authoritarianism. That's just the thing, isn't it; that's the collapse of religion in a nutshell.

— Joan Thomas,
Winnipeg writer

Presbyterian-Buddhist Monk?

"Students of mine ... learned 'Christian' and universal values in their 'hearts' — not only from a church, but from their families and ... from a Burmese refugee camp in Thailand, and while practising as a Presbyterian-Buddhist monk in Thailand!"

— from a letter in the *Toronto Star*,
September 30, 1998

Jesus has been the main topic of 65,571 books. On average, four more come out per day.

— *Servant*
magazine

The past is a resource from which we can learn, not a shrine at which we worship. It is valuable as a guidepost, but dangerous if used as a hitching post.

— James Simpson

Habit of Prayer

We live in jerky times, assaulted by "urgent" demands. For most of our ancestors in the Christian way, Scripture and prayer were embedded in routine and validated by social structures. Today, those routines have been replaced by fax and telephone.

Two hundred years ago, it was not at all uncommon for Christian barbers, carpenters, homemakers and farmers to spend an hour or two every day at their prayers. Today, I am happy if I can get my contemporaries to spend five minutes at them while commuting to work or waiting for the wash cycle to be completed at the Laundromat or sitting with a cup of coffee at break time. The old wisdom in this is "Pray as you can, not as you can't."

— Eugene Peterson in *The Wisdom of Each Other*

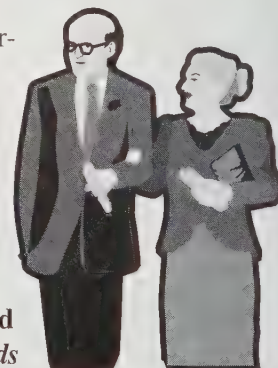
Truth
has child eyes and
a right fielder's arm;
it never fails to get you.

— from the song
"Chameleons" by
Ruben Blades

Happier, Longer Marriages

The odds of having a very happy marriage are 1.5 times greater for Canadians who attend religious services every week than for those who don't attend at all. That is true regardless of age, education, income, religion, occupation, province or residence and decade married.

— Statistics Canada and
Canadian Social Trends





Whose Birthday Is It Anyway?

In the next year or two (depending on your calculations), I must cope with something no living editor has ever had to cope with: ushering in a new millennium. That in the midst of mathematicians and calendar-keepers fighting over whether the new millennium begins with January 1, 2000, or January 1, 2001. If our past provides any help, Ephraim Scott, editor of the *Record* during the last transition, saw 1900 as the close of the millennium and 1901 as the opening of the new millennium. (Please don't send letters. I have no desire to reopen the date debate.)

With the number of those who will or already have predicted disaster at the turn of the century, it is comforting to know that, because of the miscalculations of a sixth-century Scythian monk, Christ was born four to six years BC. This means we have already entered the new millennium with most of us being unaware of it happening. Those who predicted the end were wrong — again.

Undeterred by mathematical calculations, we begin this issue of the *Record* with a regular column featuring ideas for celebrating the millennium, whenever you wish to celebrate it. Coinciding with millennium celebrations is the observance of our denomination's 125th anniversary. At the same time, churches around the world are emphasizing the millennium as the biblical Year of Jubilee, an opportunity to free poor nations from crushing debt and give them a fresh start. All of these initiatives will be featured in this column. We invite congregations, organizations and church courts to tell us how they plan to celebrate these events so that we can share their ideas with the whole church.

Sometimes, in all the excitement over the new millennium, we forget it is an event that has meaning only for Christians. For all others, it is simply another date on the calendar. So the millennium offers Christians a unique opportunity to share the basis of our faith with others. With this in mind, the *Record* will be launching a major series of articles under the title "Who Is Jesus for Us Today?" This eight-part series will run from Advent 1999 (November) until Pentecost 2000 (June). These

eight articles will explore what Presbyterians believe about Jesus as we enter the new millennium. They will be designed for congregational and small group use. We hope this study will become a major part of your millennium activities and you will plan to organize small groups to study these articles. Questions for discussion as well as other resources will be suggested along with each article.

Christians have the best reasons to celebrate the approaching millennium; Canadian Presbyterians have an added incentive

Because the millennium coincides with the 125th anniversary of the formation of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, expect to see articles in the *Record* about our past and future. With this issue, we begin a series of historical photos under the title Guideposts.

Presbyterians have always survived and frequently prospered under duress. We have not been noted as Christians who do much handclapping or flag-waving. The next two years should provide a good test of our ability to outlive a party. Maybe

we should take rocker Mick Jagger's advice. The last time he appeared at the SkyDome in Toronto, he told the crowd, "Don't worry about your Presbyterian backgrounds — just let it all loose."

John Congram

Volume CXXIII, No. 1
January 1999
ISSN 0032-7573

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Published on the first of each month except
August by The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

The *Presbyterian Record*, national magazine of
The Presbyterian Church in Canada, is responsi-
ble to the General Assembly. It exists to publish
issues relative to Christian faith and a selection of
current and timely news analyses and opinions of
interest or importance to Presbyterians across
Canada.

Member of The Canadian Church Press and
The Associated Church Press.

Publications Mail Registration No. 0264
Postage paid at Mississauga, Ontario.
Return postage guaranteed.
Send label only.

Subscription Rates

Individual: \$15
Every Home Plan (80% families subscribe): \$9
Club 50 Plan (50% families subscribe): \$11
U.S.A. and Foreign: \$20
Single Copies: \$2
All prices include GST.

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Address all correspondence and changes of
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FROM THE MODERATOR

William
Klempa



The Christian Mission Miracle of the 20th Century

An important celebration took place in October 1998 that ought not to go un-
noticed: the 100th anniversary of the Canadian Korean Mission. A confer-
ence was convened at Victoria University, University of Toronto, and an
anniversary service held in the Knox College chapel to mark the event. Unable to be
present, I sent a letter to be read at the service. The Moderator of The United Church
of Canada, Rev. Bill Phipps, did the same.

**The 100th anniversary of
the Canadian Korean
Mission is an opportunity
for Canadian Presbyterians
to recognize the Korean
Christian achievement, to
give thanks to God and to
draw lessons for our
church's mission in Canada**

The rapid growth of the church in
Korea is something of a 20th-century
miracle. Korea has become the most
"Christianized" nation in Asia with an es-
timated 25 per cent of the population be-
ing Christian. This is in stark contrast to
China and Japan. Christianity came to
China in 635, yet the number of Chris-
tians remains at fewer than 10 million.
Francis Xavier, a Jesuit missionary, intro-
duced Christianity to Japan in 1549; but,
today, Christians make up about one per
cent of the total population. Yet, in little

more than a hundred years, in addition to several million other Protestant and Roman
Catholic Christians, there are 10 million Presbyterian Christians in Korea. The Can-
adian Korean Mission established in 1898 shares in this remarkable achievement.

While Presbyterianism struggles in former strongholds such as Scotland, the
United States, Canada and Australia, Korean Presbyterianism is growing by leaps and
bounds. For example, the Myung Sung Presbyterian Church in Seoul, established in
1980, has a membership of almost 50,000. Moreover, the congregation is adding new
people at the rate of 3,000 per year — 60 per cent are new converts, most under 40
years of age. Truly, in accord with our Lord's parable of the sower in Matthew
13:3-9, the seed of the gospel has fallen
on good soil and produced a bumper crop
— a hundred times, indeed a million
times what has been sown.

Planting Christianity in Korea

Koreans, not foreigners, planted Chris-
tianity in Korea. A Korean convert of a
Chinese Jesuit mission introduced Roman
Catholicism to Korea; however, it failed to
grow because laypeople were not versed
in the Scriptures. Protestant work in Korea
began with the translation of the Bible.
Two Scottish missionaries in Manchuria
worked with five Koreans to translate the
New Testament into Hangul, the language
of the *minjung*, the common people. Suh

(Continued on page 29)

Moderator's Itinerary

January 10

Joint congregational service
Central and Knox's churches,
Cambridge, Ontario

January 12

Presbytery of Hamilton, Ontario

January 14

St. Andrew's, Thorold, Ontario

January 17

Knox, Listowel, Ontario

January 18

Presbytery of Huron-Perth, Ontario

January 19

Presbytery of Brampton, Ontario

January 24

St. Andrew and St. Paul, Montreal

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Our Cover

Jean Vanier at the L'Arche Community in Richmond Hill, Ontario. Photo: *Toronto Star* / Ken Faught.

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- How do you say goodbye?
- Religious life in Russia today
- The nominees for Moderator of the 125th General Assembly

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Leslie Scrivener

Jean Vanier returns to Canada's first L'Arche community

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Judy Dearborn Nill

Allowing the Bible to direct our prayers

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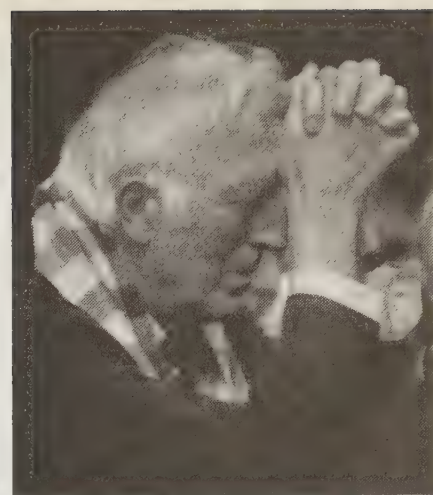
Phil Callaway

How would you like to be remembered?

28 Saint Lucien?

Joseph C. McLelland

Reflections on the Quebec election



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26

The Other Side of Casinos

Thank you for the focus on gambling in the November *Record*. This is a discussion that must take place. However, I didn't get the sense that all cards in this debate had been played.

As a resident of Niagara Falls, the location of one of Ontario's casinos, I have become aware there are undeniably positive benefits to having a casino in this city. Before the casino, Niagara Falls was a depressed community, a poor cousin in the Greater Toronto Area. Good jobs were scarce, and much of the tourist industry closed its doors during the winter, leaving people without work.

Since the "Golden Goose" (as some locals call the casino) came to town, many tourist attractions stay open throughout the year. This keeps people working, several new hotels are being built, and there are good, paying jobs with benefits at the casino. This means many are able to provide for their families. People are going to the dentist again and getting their prescriptions filled again. The city overall is a much healthier place.

I don't deny the social cost to gambling. Lives are hurt and destroyed because of problem gambling. Gambling also stands against the providence of God and good stewardship of what God has given us. Personally, I can think of about

a thousand more faithful ways to use my money. However, I felt a fair discussion needed to recognize that communities such as Niagara Falls are more prosperous because of the casino's presence.

Doug Schonberg,
Niagara Falls, Ont.

I appreciated the article on gambling. It was effective at contextualizing the expansion of state induced gambling and in reminding readers of the church's policies.

The August 25th issue of the *Globe and Mail* contained an article based on a Stats Canada study on volunteering and giving in Canada — why people do it, who does it and regional patterns. Buried in it is a stat which caught my attention. In 1997, Canadians donated \$4.5 billion to charities. Another \$1.28 billion "was spent supporting charities through charitable gambling." The percentage of revenues derived from gambling is growing. As all levels of government cut back on social spending and in support to charities, it is no surprise a growing number of charities are turning to revenues generated from gambling activities.

Of all the requests Justice Ministries received from individuals and congregations in Ontario between December 1997 and April 1998, information on church policy regarding gambling topped the list.

Stephen Allen, Justice Ministries,
The Presbyterian Church in Canada

I read with interest the article in the November *Record* entitled "Gambling's Painful Payoff." Having attended the challenging conference "The Economy: A New Bottom Line" two weeks prior, the timing was great. While there, my consciousness was raised about gambling casinos in the province and, in

particular, the case of Brantford where the Campaign for a Better Brantford is urging residents to take a second look at the implications for housing a charity casino in Brantford.

One of the issues coming to light in those discussions is the fact that so little (about 20 per cent) of the money earned in the casino actually goes to charity and other needy causes, while the rest goes elsewhere: to the province, to promotion, to the investors, and even to pay for gambling addiction counselling!

**Shorter letters
are more likely
to be published
and less likely
to be edited**

WATSON'S WORLD

Noel Watson



We must be wary not to fall for the myths perpetuated around casinos. I believe the stakes are too high.

*Wanda Thompson,
Guelph, Ont.*

From the Trenches

The author of "A View From the Trenches: Reflections of a Minister's Spouse" and Kathy Cawsey's "Splinters Off the Family Tree" (November *Record*) have it right. We must learn to reach out to others in our church and community. We must climb out of the ruts of our past, or the future of Presbyterianism in Canada will be bleak. It's time to move on.

*John Patterson,
Pointe Claire, Que.*

Dear Anonymous,

Your closing question ["A View From the Trenches," Nov. *Record*] says something about our attitude. Jesus did not wait for the system around him to change. It was he who changed. So what about not going to church one Sunday? Put on old clothes and help where it is needed; not as a minister's spouse, whose duty it is, but as an ordinary Josephine Average, unidentified, as in your reflections.

I don't mean to belittle your concerns. But I suspect we are talking about style too often when we should be discussing substance.

*Dieter S. Leidel,
Barrie, Ont.*

Pacifism and the Just War

There is a bitter, perhaps unintended irony in the juxtapositioning of Rosemary Doran's "A Serpent in Eden" with Professor McLelland's "Catch-17" in the November *Record*.

Pacifism would not have halted the Nazi armies 60 years ago. Denmark offered little resistance in 1940 but was still brutally occupied. The French capitulation did not save its citizens from savage Nazi occupation and repression.

Mahatma Gandhi's earlier civil disobedience campaign against Britain achieved a measure of success only because Britain exercised some humanity and "played by the rules." Such pas-

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Proverbs 31:8-9



Photo: Nuevo Diario, Managua, Nicaragua

Across the world, women provide health care, gather fuel, manage finances, teach, care for children, sell, cook, work for human rights, buy food, minister, organize communities, clean, raise animals, make clothes and pottery, sow and harvest, fish, care for the elderly, and struggle against racism — among many things.

Too often, the contributions of women to the family, the community and the economy are not valued or even recognized. Because of this, PWS&D's community development programs support the experience, ideas and leadership of women as they work to secure a brighter future for their families and communities.

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sive resistance would have availed nothing in Europe in the '30s and '40s.

Perhaps I'm saying in a roundabout way that a just war is not inconceivable, however deplorable, when pacifism is ineffective.

*R. M. Strang,
Surrey, B.C.*

I served overseas in England and Europe with the Canadian army from 1941-1944. During that time, as a 21-year-old soldier, I became a converted Christian, although I had been baptized and attended Sunday school and church up to that time. Through reading the Bible, particularly the New Testament, I too had strong thoughts that pacifism was the only way Christians should respond during that war. But I didn't take any action on that and continued to do what I was called on to do as a soldier.

When the war was over, we found out what horrible acts were committed by the Germans against the Jews, dissidents and others, and by the Japanese against their prisoners of war, including many Canadians. I realized we had to do what we did to end that war.

I feel strongly that McLelland's article should not have been used in November, the month we remember those who gave their lives to stop inhumanity to humanity.

*George Dimson,
West Hill, Ont.*

The answer to the question "Why are you NOT a pacifist?" posed in "Catch-17" (November *Record*) is found in the previous article, "A Serpent in Eden," which speaks eloquently of a visit to the site of a Nazi death camp. For six years, we saw Evil on the rampage in Europe. There was call after call for justice and peace, but every sop thrown to that Cerberus simply whetted his appetite for hegemony in Europe.

John 14:27 is the message spoken by the Prince of Peace. His definition of the peace he offers is an inner peace, a God-given harmony in the face of adversity — not the world's definition of peace (absence of conflict, escape from adversity).

In Canada, we enjoy a freedom de-

nied to half the world, a freedom won for us by thousands who died in defence of freedom in two world conflicts.

*Harold Cameron,
London, Ont.*

I agree, pacifism is a laudable ideal for which we must strive. Nevertheless, it may not always be possible to avoid a war when some nations have leaders such as Saddam Hussein or an Adolf Hitler who, with their associates, do not accept Christian principles nor have any regard for the rights and freedom of other people. There are times when their march must be stopped, even if it takes a war to do it.

I say these things as a veteran of one war and as a Christian. I hope my reasons for not being a pacifist are clear. Based on Mark 13 alone, I do not see the complete abolition of wars until Jesus appears again on earth.

*Stewart P. Geddes,
London, Ont.*

Pen Pals, Anyone?

The children who received thank-you cards from people who received their flowers at General Assembly were happy to hear that their flowers travelled so far.

I wonder if there might be children in our church across Canada who would like pen pals? If they write to Anishinabe Fellowship Centre, 287 Laura St., Winnipeg, Man. R3A 1C4, include a picture and tell us something about themselves, we will match up a pen pal for them. This would be a wonderful experience for our children.

*Denise Fenez, Director,
Anishinabe Fellowship Centre, Winnipeg*

Irritated

As elders of Lakeshore St. Andrew's Church in Windsor, Ontario, we found Keith Boyer's letter (Oct. *Record*) irritating and offensive. The "leaps of logic" which he puts forth are both intellectually and theologically flawed. They include:

1. That those of us who support the decision of the 122nd General Assembly regarding the call to Darryl Macdonald are part of "the ancient scheme of homophobia."

2. That the decision of the congregation of St. Andrew's, Lachine, Quebec, "to choose his [Macdonald's] ministry over denominational affiliation" is evidence that God's Spirit does "call from tomorrow." The implication is that those who support the 122nd Assembly's decision are incapable of discerning the Holy Spirit's call.
3. Who would possibly believe that the commissioners of the 122nd General Assembly engaged in decision-making with any set of priorities other than wisdom, grace and love? Yet, Boyer implies it was a decision rooted in fear and, by implication, one day we will be mature enough to choose the former over the latter.

We agree with the editor's comments that "debates on this issue have increasingly become repetitious and non-productive. Rather than resulting in changing people's convictions, this approach has tended to harden people in their views."

We submit that, as long as individuals such as Keith Boyer draw their conclusions that homophobia and fear are the bases on which support for the Assembly's decision was given, we will continue to be non-productive.

*Joan Ashley, Russ Banfill, Bill Boycott,
Marilyn Boycott, Chuck Congram,
David Francis, Al Jubenville,
Bob MacDonald, Ed McDermid,
Alex McRae, Betty McRae,
Dianne Milec, John Murray,
Windsor, Ont.*

Reaction to ANN Ad

The letter (Nov. *Record*) from Cecil MacRae concerning ANN (A New Network) brought back sad memories for me. He said he was alarmed by the propaganda published in this advertisement. So am I.

The success of a similar campaign about 10 years ago prompted me to leave the United Church, where I had been a regular member for some 40 years, and join the Presbyterian Church. I remember too well how well-meaning supporters of gay rights took over the agenda. Our discussions started with whether practising homosexuals and lesbians should be ordained or prayed with to ask God for for-

giveness and help not to sin again. They turned a polite, reasoned theological discussion based on the Bible and logic into a well-organized fight to justify and legitimize lesbian and homosexual practice. They used every means at their disposal, including ridicule and tears.

I think the *Record* would be well-advised to refuse to accept advertisements from an organization that appears to be intent on spreading distress, turmoil and a similar loss of fellowship in the Presbyterian Church.

*John M. Conrod,
Thunder Bay, Ont.*

It was with wry amusement that I read Cecil MacRae's letter. I am a subscriber to ANN, which is not affiliated with any other publication. Bewildering as it may seem, ANN is supported by thoughtful Presbyterians who do not simply stand in church and mechanically read aloud the words on page 25 of *Living Faith*.

I admire the congregation of St. Andrew's, Lachine, Quebec, for their courage in acting according to their convictions. I am certain this decision was made after much intelligent interaction with the Holy Spirit.

*Joan M. Bell,
Toronto*

From a Critical Fan

I have been a fan of Kathy Cawsey for some time and look forward to her straightforward comments in the *Record*. But I have two questions about her apparent point of view on the homosexual issue.

First, is she really afraid The Presbyterian Church in Canada will become smaller, or even be destroyed, if we do not accept practising homosexuals? My experience says that, by taking a firm stance, our denomination may grow!

Second, is Kathy aware the Bible does not sit on the fence when it condemns homosexual practice? It is a sin as deplorable as murder or adultery.

On the other hand, should we drive "gays" out of our church? I say no. We need to comfort and guide them.

*Gary Chiang,
Ancaster, Ont.*

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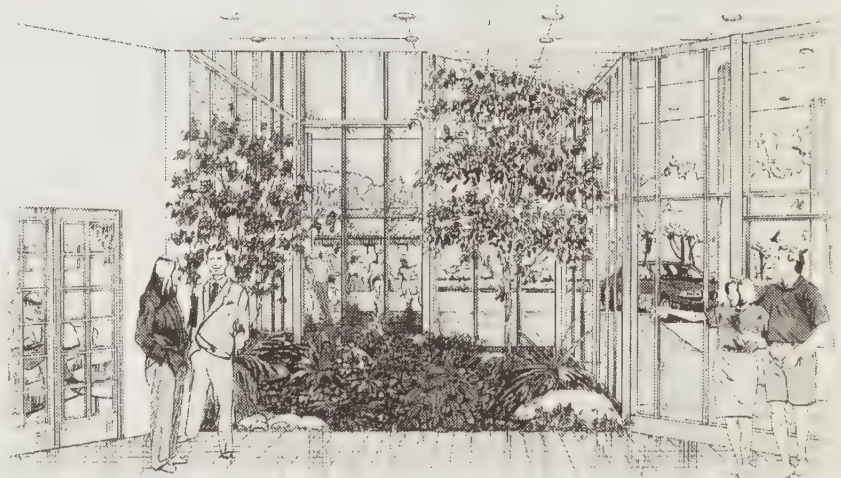
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Beatitudes & Blessing: The Catechism of Jesus

Matthew 5:1-12

Perhaps we should express our New Year's resolutions by publicly reading the Sermon on the Mount on a Sunday in January. Members of the congregation would respond after each of verses three to 11 with a hearty "Amen." Could we do it?

The significance of the Sermon on the Mount is widely acclaimed as expressed here in the words of someone signed "Anonymous": *If you were to take the sum total of all the authoritative articles ever written by the most qualified of psychologists and psychiatrists on the subject of mental hygiene*

- if you were to combine them and refine them and cleave out the excess verbiage
- if you were to ... have these unadulterated bits of pure scientific knowledge concisely expressed by the most capable of living poets, you would have an awkward and incomplete summation of the Sermon on the Mount.

Is this a realistic ethic for contemporary Christians? The New Testament scholar Joachim Jeremias observed that the Sermon on the Mount has been interpreted three ways throughout the years:

1. Perfectionist. The Sermon is Jesus' call to perfection on the part of his disciples. It is a requirement of those who are followers of Jesus.
2. Idealist. The teaching cannot be fulfilled. The Sermon is an impossible ideal that moves the hearer to despair. It is preparation for the gospel (*praeparatio evangelica*) which drives the followers of Jesus into the arms of grace.
3. Interim Ethic. The teaching is of exceptional laws intended for an interim

period or what scholars call eschatological laws for the Last Days. Those living in the Last Days could afford to set aside more "practical" life-styles.

However we understand the Sermon on the Mount, it certainly has something to do with the way Christians live. To

say "Amen" to the Beatitudes is to be in conflict with much of what is taken for granted in our everyday lives. When Gospel people take to the streets with this "gauntlet flung down" before the world's accepted standards, something will change. Lives lived in the grace of

God will be marked by conflict, collision and an unwillingness to collude with the "powers that be." Such lives will act something like yeast in dough, salt to the insipid and light in darkness.

Note that there is no blessing sounded here for those who use and abuse others or live for themselves and the accumulation of power and possessions. The blessing is for those who associate their lives with the orphans and widows, the poor and the suffering. Blessed are those who join Jesus' concern for the hungry, the homeless, the hapless and the helpless. "Blessed are those who make the music of happiness for others" (Norma Koenig).

The Sermon on the Mount begins with a notation that Jesus sat. The reference is to official teaching, authority, *ex cathedra* with its literal meaning "from the seat." Although Pharaonic Egypt and the ancient Greeks used chairs, they were hardly known or used elsewhere in the world. Where they were used, they were either ceremonial or a "seat" of authority.

**Lives lived in the
grace of God will
be marked by
conflict and an
unwillingness to
collude with the
"powers that be"**

Comfortable chairs are relatively new and, as the debate in Canada's Sikh community shows, they require tables and the acquisition of a different culture.

The introduction continues with "he opened his mouth," indicating something special such as a Greek oracle or a prophetic word. The verb that follows, "saying," is in the imperfect tense, indicating a repeated, habitual action — Jesus customarily or regularly said this.

The Greek word *makarios*, usually translated "blessed" or "happy," also bears consideration. It does not mean the sensation of pleasure. In *Brave New World*, Aldous Huxley suggested that, to get the sensation of pleasure, people would use drugs — choosing "happiness" over freedom. As I understand C. S. Lewis's argument in *The Problem of Pain*, we do not insist on happiness on any terms for those we love but would rather see them do what is right and good and true even if suffering is the result. The blessing of the Beatitudes is not the "ha ha" of laughter but the security of living in the love of God. It refers to a life lived independent of the alterations, interruptions and happenstance of life. **R**

For Discussion and Reflection

- How do you regard the ethic of the Sermon on the Mount as suggested in the choices provided by Jeremias?
- How does your understanding of the end of time affect your behaviour?
- What are the differences between the Beatitudes in Matthew and those found in Luke 6:17, 20-23?
- Although we haven't looked beyond the Beatitudes, how is the Sermon on the Mount a manifesto to discipleship, the Magna Carta of faith or maybe even a catechism of Jesus for his followers?

L. E. Ted Sivers is the minister of First Church in New Westminster, B.C.

Ten Commandments or Ten Suggestions

David R. Nicholson

Many people in the Christian Church and outside it face the temptation to adjust their beliefs and convictions to suit the passing fads of our time. This adjustment may arise from a sincere desire to be relevant. It may also result from a desire not to be different from the predominant view of society. When the Church makes such accommodations, the result is often a diluted and ineffective Christianity.

Sadly, we can no longer look for support of traditional Christian values in many public institutions. Neither do we see a Christian life-style exemplified through much of the modern media, especially in films and television. On the contrary, we often see a high standard of moral values caricatured and ridiculed.

Increasingly, the individual or church that speaks out against pornography, permissiveness and moral pollution is in a minority position. For many people today, there are no absolutes. They do not believe it is possible to say "This is true" or "That is wrong." Instead, many claim the right to act in any situation according

to their own desires and preferences. An absolute, God-centred standard of right and wrong is foreign to many in our society and in our churches.

The inevitable and logical conclusion of this way of thinking and living is chaos. When every individual does that

which is right in his or her own eyes, faith and trust in God and in God's revealed truth is unnecessary. If there is, in fact, no God to whom we are ultimately responsible, what is wrong with stealing, lying or even taking human life

in certain situations? If there is no God, there is no ultimate ground for moral behaviour. The Ten Commandments become merely the Ten Suggestions.

The rejection of absolutes is not new. As far back as the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve refused to accept God's standard. They decided for themselves what was good in their own eyes. The result was expulsion from the Garden. In modern life, the results of refusing to live by God's standards are alienation, boredom, meaninglessness, absence of self-worth and unhappiness. **R**

David Nicholson is the minister of First Church in Pembroke, Ont.

What happens when the Ten Commandments become the Ten Suggestions?

YOU PROBABLY SHOULD NOT KILL ANYONE UNLESS YOU REALLY HAVE TO

IF YOU LIE, YOU MIGHT GET CAUGHT

COMMITTING ADULTERY IS NOT A GOOD IDEA

YOU SHOULD TAKE A BREAK ON SUNDAYS

STEALING IS NOT A NICE THING TO DO

Ronald

has been a friend of the Hall for most of his adult life. Although most of my contact with him was casual — a cup of coffee, help with new I.D. and the like — over time, we came to know each other well. Three years ago, our relationship took a dramatic turn. One wintry morning, I found him lying sideways in the slush outside the Hall. His last handful of dollars was on the ground, partially protected by his fallen body. He was still alive — truly a miracle. In his desperation, and in his pitiful, semi-conscious state, he had managed to find his way to those he trusted. Ronald had found his way to the Hall. Our friendship continues.

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Guess What? You Missed the Millennium

Suddenly, it's 1999, and we're one year closer to the millennium.

I said "closer" because there's a division of opinion on when that millennium will happen. The mathematically inclined insist the millennium comes when the year 2000 turns into the year 2001. We don't start counting at 0, they insist; we start counting at 1. So a 10, 100 or a 1000 is the *end* of one series, not the *beginning* of the next.

For the mathematically challenged, though, the most noticeable change will occur when the 19 turns into a 20. And the mass media, of course, will exploit that perception. The media, generally, have never been noted for self-discipline or restraint. In his book *Emotional Intelligence*, Daniel Goleman claims a sign of emotional maturity is a person's willingness to defer pleasure. On a small scale, instead of gobbling that cookie right now, we are willing to wait until we can enjoy it better with a cup of tea later. On a larger scale, we save now so we can have a retirement income later. Measured by Goleman's standards, the mass media generally have the emotional maturity of a child going through the Terrible Twos.

So, for most people, the millennium will begin with a glorious bash this coming New Year's Eve. But the whole discussion is academic;

because, if there is anything significant about 2,000 years after the birth of Jesus, it has already happened. The millennium probably occurred some time between 1994 and 1996.

Blame the confusion on an obscure Greek monk named Dionysius Exiguus. In our year 532, he was ordered to recalculate the Roman calendar. Until then, the Romans had dated everything from the founding of the capital city. But a Christian emperor wanted to convert everything to a new calendar which made Christ's birth the watershed, the division between BC and AD — "Before Christ" and "Anno Domini," the Year of our Lord.

The problem, of course, was no one had bothered keeping records for the birth dates of peasants' children. They kept pretty accurate records for Roman emperors. Even for governors of Roman provinces. But certainly not for conquered peoples such as the Jews in the poverty-stricken backwaters of Palestine.

So Dionysius Exiguus had to work backwards on whatever evidence he could find. He got it about 99 per cent correct. But not quite perfect. According to his calendar, King Herod (known as Herod the Great mostly because he began rebuilding the Temple in Jerusalem) died in 4 BC. Yet, according to Matthew's gospel, the Magi, the so-called Wise Men, visited this same Herod to find out where the new king had been born. Something doesn't quite compute.

If the Bible is correct — and I see no reason to doubt the oral traditions connecting Jesus' birth to the final years of

Herod's reign — Jesus was born some time between 6 and 4 BC. Which means the millennium passed a few years ago. Without fanfare. Much like the birth of Christ.

The Magi made a splash, but they may not have shown up until a year or more later. The actual birth was recognized, according to Luke's gospel, only by a bunch of smelly, illiterate shepherds who had seen a vision in the night skies and came carousing through the silent streets to check it out. Even though King David had been a shepherd, shepherds did not belong to the upper-crust of Bethlehem society. So the birth passed pretty much unnoticed.

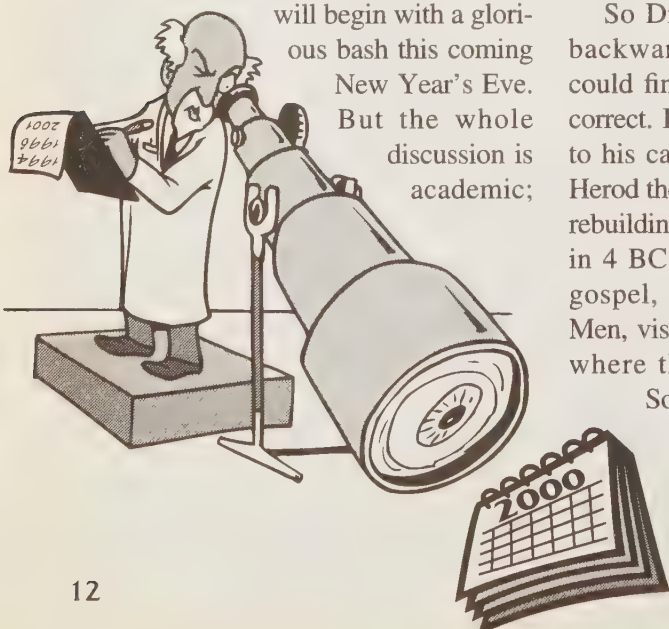
And, maybe, that's how it should be. Because a unifying message of this man's birth, death and resurrection is that really important things don't happen with a fanfare of trumpets and a blaze of publicity. They happen in the corner of your eye, a flicker in peripheral vision that only a few people notice.

Important things start as insignificant — as a beat of a butterfly's wings. It's only later we realize that beat influenced the direction of a typhoon hitting Tokyo. The things that make a difference may be no more than a hand held in the darkness. An encouraging postscript in a letter. A generous impulse.

Change starts in small ways. The little things we do affect the harmony of the universe. Not some accidental multiples of the 10 fingers we learned to count on. **[E]**

Jim Taylor is a writer, editor and co-founder of Wood Lake Books.

The fact the millennium passed a few years ago may hold the authentic millennium message



My dear editor:

I hope the festive season has not drained your tank of goodwill toward persons.

It seems cruel that most congregations have but barely recovered from the decompression process that follows the turning of the year when they are submerged in the dreaded Annual Congregational Meeting — preparations for and realization of. At good old GNP (St. George-North Park Presbyterian), Dr. J. Paddyngton Bayer (J.P.) decided to forgo the honour of chairing the meeting this year. He hasn't exactly *admitted* defeat, but has found the opportunity to enrich his ministry by taking a course on "The E-Mail Pastor." It will be held in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, over the very February weekend designated for the annual meeting.

There was some grumbling when he announced his intention and course choice to the session. Some remembered how hard it was to persuade J.P. he did not need a lead-lined apron to sit in front of his new computer. (This is *all* he has managed to do, though he looks thoughtful doing so, in the six years since GNP entered the wonderful world of keyboard communication.) He *has* found the screen-saver graphics to be soothing and less bother than an aquarium. Most of the ruling elders were sympathetic, however, considering the ineradicable memories of last year's annual meeting.

J.P. had determined "to give some zip and pep" to what had been, admittedly, a dreary succession of reports to the shareholders. Financial statements were *always* alarming to someone, no matter what the size of the amount on either side of the balance sheet. Despair that "so many don't bother to come" elicited suggestions to change the date and time and/or to offer more food. And occasional breaches in the blest tie that binds all hearts in Christian love were J.P.'s job to smooth over as "vigorous exchanges of deeply shared concern."

He wasn't sure *how* to make the whole process "hum with the energy of a congregation on the move," as he put it

to his associate, Rev. Millicent MacPherson (known to her friends as Millimac and to J.P. as the Unguideable Missile).

"You mean less like reruns from the Weather Channel and more like the Fox network?" she asked. "Or less like Jerry Springer and more like *Washington Week in Review*?"

He looked at her blankly and decided to change the subject and keep his own counsel.

In the end, he decided to go with a "modern business" approach. For the vote on the budget, he would assume the role of chief executive officer (not much of an effort). He had special covers printed to enfold the annual reports. On the front, underneath the title "For God and GNP" (there wasn't room to spell it out) embossed in gold gothic lettering, was an artist's sketch of St. George slaying a dragon labelled "Deficit." On the back, were head-and-shoulders shots of the happy staff surrounding a photo of J.P. in a cardigan with leather elbow patches, sitting at a book-covered desk and pondering the copy of the Hebrew Scriptures he got from the Bible Society as a student minister. Millimac ungraciously remarked that the ancient Scriptures were upside-down; but he was not to be daunted, swearing her to silence and resting in the likely assurance that no one else would know.

He also bought a laser-beam pointer. It was while practising with this new bit of high-tech equipment, waving it about and rasping "Luuuke ... I am your father," that he was surprised by his secretary. Accidentally pointing the beam at the full-length mirror before which he robed on Sundays, he nearly blinded himself as the reflected light caught the bridge of his nose.

Beginning now to detect incipient daunts in his confidence, he none the less pushed on and asked Millimac to bring her "portable thing-a-ma-jig" to the meeting. He hated calling it a "lap-top,"

thinking the term vulgar. Once, in a moment of forgetfulness, he referred to it as her Etch-a-Sketch, remembering the fascinating toy he had once purchased for a nephew. Hell had no fury like a tekkie-feminist who thought herself scorned.

It wasn't J.P.'s intention that Millimac actually *use* her lap-top for anything important, not even for minutes. He simply wanted her to "click it now and then" to "add a touch of the modern business world to the proceedings." Alas for J.P., when word got out that the hall would be

"wired" (in more than one sense), four board of managers members, three trustees and six ruling elders came equipped with *their* lap-tops, not to mention the president of

the Young Couple's Club who taught computer science at a local community college.

Three hours into the meeting, they were still on the hefty investments portfolio that made up GNP's endowments fund. J.P.'s jaunty boutonniere had wilted and his beautifully coloured pie-charts lay scattered about on the floor or upside-down on the tables, bearing the doodlings of those who had managed to stick it out so far.

To top it all off, J.P. had been so busy with his plans and preparations, he had neglected to attend the local ministerial. He had not known that the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was to be followed by the Month for Inter-Faith Understanding. The idea was that a visitor from another faith would attend "a typical business meeting" of each participating group "to further understanding at the grassroots level." The visitor to GNP's annual meeting was J.P.'s good friend Rabbi Herschel Cohen from Temple Emmanuel who, unlike J.P., *could* read Hebrew, upside-down or not.

Yours in a businesslike fashion,

Peter Plymley II



Canada's Disciple to the Disabled

by Leslie Scrivener

All his life, Jean Vanier has trusted in his guiding light or intuition. He calls it following his star. It has led him where few of us could follow.

He left the navy to be a priest. He left his studies before ordination and became a philosophy professor. He left the University of Toronto in his mid-30s to live obscurely

Jean Vanier devotes his life to tearing down walls that confine the afflicted

with two disabled men in a village in France. And from that simple, instinctive act was born L'Arche, the international community of homes for the intellectually disabled — now more than 100 around the world with 24 of these in Canada.

"I have always been naïve, with the lack of a plan," Vanier said before the Massey

lecture which he gave at Convocation Hall in Toronto last November. This poor planner, the son of Pauline and Georges Vanier (a former governor general), is one of the world's remarkable men.

"I am happy. I live in the present, not so much in the future making plans. If you live fully in the present, you have an intuition about what is to be done."

Some might compare him to Mahatma Gandhi, the great soul, who revolutionized India as he identified with the poor, the outcasts and the untouchables. Vanier says he was deeply influenced by Gandhi.

He is wary of institutions. The theme of the first Massey lecture was his fear of the walls that separate people. "We must do what we can to diminish walls, to meet each other. Why do we put people with disabilities behind walls?" he asked. Vanier has come to believe that "those with intellectual disabilities are among the most oppressed and excluded in the world." He has seen the brutal mistreatment of people with intellectual disabilities.

Vanier says it is our fear of those who are different, those who challenge our authority, our certitude, and our value system. "We are all so frightened of losing what is important for us, the things that give us life, security and status in society. We are frightened of change and, I suspect, we are even more frightened of our own hearts."

His simple belief was that the disabled, our outcasts, could live best in a family-like setting where distinctions between helpers and the helped were minimized. The intellectually disabled, the people we may think of as mad or find awful to look at, are not simply a problem in his view.

In *Becoming Human*, the book compiled from the Massey Lectures and published by Anansi Press, he writes of a French doctor who, when his daughter was born with a disability, said, "What have I done to God that he should send me such a disaster?"

The disabled are not disasters to Vanier; they are his teachers, he says. "They need laughter and play; they need people who will celebrate life with them." Every child, every person, Vanier writes, "needs to know that they are a

source of joy; every child, every person needs to be accepted."

Vanier radiates empathy as he enters a room, takes each person's hand and looks at each one with a gentle, penetrating look. His is not the busy world of current events and people. As he walks, he rests his hand comfortably on his companion's shoulder, though they have only met. When the name of newspaper mogul Conrad Black is mentioned, Vanier asks who he is.

"Jean has always been serene," said Bruce Stock, an aide-de-camp to the Vaniers in the 1960s. "His mindset is so completely different and apart from the ordinary, it takes you aback."

"Every person needs to know that they are a source of joy"

But like any of us, Vanier has had those difficult encounters on the street with people in need. On a Paris street, a dishevelled woman shouted at him to give her money. "I became frightened. I had an appointment and I didn't want to be late so I gave her a little money and went on my way.... I was frightened of being swallowed up by her pain and her need."

He says it's easy to give food to a beggar knocking on our door. "But if he keeps coming back with his friends — then what do we do?... We are frightened that the beggar is calling on us to change our life-style.

"We are all frightened of the ugly, the dirty. We all want to turn away from anything that reveals the failure, the pain, sickness and death beneath the brightly painted surface of our ordered lives. Civilization is, at least in part, about pretending that things are better than they are."

He doesn't suggest inviting the homeless to move in with you. Don't invoke the impossible, he says. Think of what you can do. "Visit the dying in the hospital. Help an old lady on your street. If your heart is opening up, the heart of the little old lady opens up and something beautiful is happening."

Now 70, Vanier lives in the same French village where he started L'Arche (French for the ark) 34 years ago. He travels often, giving retreats and visiting L'Arche communities.

He gave up what most of us would consider worldly success to be with a French priest, Father Thomas Philippe. "I knew my life was bonded to his ... I had very deep experiences of God in his presence. It was obvious just to go ahead. When you've got a good master, why pretend that you are a master? In our world, we are formed by books, not by wise and holy men."

Some of the young people who work at Daybreak, the L'Arche home in Richmond Hill near Toronto for 44 men and women with disabilities, had not heard of Vanier when they came to live among the intellectually disabled. But they live out his ideas. Sometimes, they take the core members, as the people with disabilities are called, to medical appointments or go to the movies, have tea, go dancing, do laundry together.

Others are more demanding. Chris Jarvis lives with Michael, 29, who cannot speak, dress or care for himself. But Jarvis, 22, waves off any suggestion of personal sacrifice in what he does. "To be with Michael is a really sacred thing, knowing him as intimately as I do. I get to know Michael in different ways. He communicates with his eyes and his smile is amazing. Communication is as clear as if we were talking back and forth."

Joe Egan has been part of L'Arche for 25 years. He is responsible for the eight L'Arche communities across Ontario. "The most striking thing for me is [Vanier's] humility," says Egan. "He recognizes there's a gift in every person." **R**

Leslie Scrivener is faith and ethics reporter for the *Toronto Star*. Reprinted with permission — The *Toronto Star* Syndicate.

Allowing God to speak to you personally through the written Word



Praying the Scriptures

Before *lectio*, I had no idea what spirituality was,” says Ann Gruger, a Presbyterian elder. “In church, I sometimes felt the presence of God. I always thought this was nice, but it wasn’t lasting. I also wondered if it was a product of my own imagination.”

Gruger worships at a small church about 150 miles from the British Columbia-U.S. border. She participates in a weekly *lectio divina* group started by her pastor in September 1996. In February 1997, two more groups began meeting at the church. Another group formed in April 1998.

“In the *lectio* group, I have become conscious of God, or the Holy Spirit, right there among us,” Gruger comments. “I knew some of these people before we began the group, but not all. Now, they feel like my brothers and sisters in Christ — my family.” When her husband was hospitalized recently with life-threatening pneumonia, she says she coped with the crisis better than she would have before.

John Mears, another *lectio* participant, says he has learned to appreciate “a full spectrum of authentic expressions of faith I wasn’t willing to recognize before. This appreciation now extends to the whole congregation.”

Margaret John finds help for everyday problems. “If I’ve got a problem that’s uppermost in my life, there’s a calming influence when I go to *lectio*. It allows me to look for a way to deal with it in love.”

Two participants even claim their marriage was revitalized by being in a *lectio* group together. “When we first started,” says Dennis Nill, “Judy and I were focusing on the differences between us — going through tough times. We heard each other say things in *lectio* we weren’t hearing anywhere else. It was the beginning of knowing what God was doing in

by Judy Dearborn Nill

A Process for Lectio Divina Groups

- 1 The leader asks participants to close their eyes and centre with breathing or prayer.
- 2 After a minute or two, the leader slowly reads a short passage of Scripture twice. The Scripture may be taken from the lectionary or selected at random. Participants listen for a word or phrase that attracts their attention. During a one-minute silence following the reading, members of the group focus on the word or phrase by mentally repeating it to themselves. The leader then goes around the circle, allowing each person to say the word or phrase aloud. Members may pass on this or any step.
- 3 The leader asks another participant to read the text again. Members are instructed to notice how their lives are touched by the word or phrase to which they've been drawn. After a two-minute silence, participants may share a feeling, reflection or sensory impression.
- 4 Before the final reading aloud, the leader directs people to open themselves to whatever God may be inviting them to be or to do in the coming week. Several minutes of silence follow and, then, participants share again around the circle as they wish.

With all these steps, the leader emphasizes this is an interactive process in which participants approach God through the written word and the prayer it inspires. They are listening, receiving and being invited, rather than analysing, choosing or deciding.
- 5 Moving around the circle one last time, members pray silently or aloud for the person on their right for strength to respond to God's invitation. The silence may continue, other intercessory prayers and the Lord's Prayer may be added, or members may discuss the process (especially if they are new to it).

Adapted from *Gathered in the Word: Praying the Scripture in Small Groups* by Norvene Vest (Upper Room Books, 1997).

each other's life and in our life together."

Lectio divina, or holy reading, is described by Rev. Kristine Haig, who leads workshops on the practice of lectio, as "praying the Scriptures." The practice of meditative reading of sacred texts traces its roots to the pre-Christian era, but it is most closely associated with the early monastic traditions. The Rule of Benedict from the sixth century, for instance, advises monks to do lectio daily.

The practice spread throughout the church during the Middle Ages. Reformers such as John Calvin and the English Puritan Richard Baxter practised lectio, but non-intellectual approaches to Scripture fell into disfavour following the Age of Enlightenment.

Lectio is not Bible study. "It is complementary to, not a substitute for Bible study," Haig explains. "We need both." With lectio, there is no attempt to analyse or interpret the text. Instead, you

absorb a passage of Scripture prayerfully, allowing God to speak to you personally through the written word.

"This isn't primarily about understanding the text of the Bible," says Haig. "It's about understanding *us*. In praying with the Bible, we're trying to understand God's will for our lives."

In a lectio group, Haig adds, participants develop "a capacity to engage in the corporate experience of silence — a powerful experience. Sometimes, we talk so much, the Spirit can't get a word in edgewise."

Individual and group practice of lectio divina has made a come-back among both clergy and lay Christians since the 1970s. First revived by Roman Catholics, it moved into Protestant churches through authors such as Presbyterian Marjorie Thompson, Anglican Norvene Vest and Methodist Robert Mulholland. It is taught at seminaries, retreat centres, conferences

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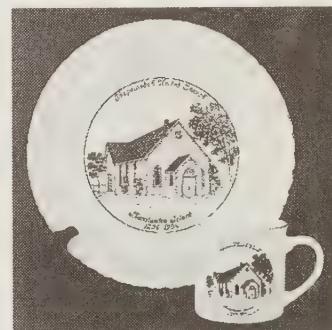
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Guideposts

Celebrating Our Heritage



Open air Communion were common among Presbyterians during the early days of Canada. Travelling ministers met with people wherever they could gather, because there was often no church building. Psalms were sung, prayers said, a sermon preached. The communicants looked upon the sacrament, often observed only yearly, as a special and sacred occasion.

Individual Practice of Lectio Divina

- 1 Slowly read a brief passage of Scripture silently or aloud. Stay with any word or phrase that draws you.
- 2 Let the word or phrase call up a feeling, thought, image or memory.
- 3 Notice whether there is an invitation there. Is God calling you to be or to do something in the days ahead? Have you been challenged or affirmed?
- 4 Rest peacefully in God's presence.

and congregational gatherings across the continent.

Lectio is "a way of integrating left and right brain approaches to Scripture," says Rev. Rebecca Bradburn Langer, Presbyterian pastor and author of *Harvest of Righteousness*, a self-published workbook she uses in teaching lectio to groups. "People, Presbyterians in particular," she says, "are looking for ways to reconnect with Scripture. Lectio is so user-friendly, so simple for anyone."

Rev. Gary Barckert, who introduced lectio divina to our congregation, feels lectio practised in a group "brings the Body of Christ, the family of God, into lived experience. It's a corrective to the imbalance of a piety that stresses only an individual's personal relationship with Christ."

But he encourages its practice in private, too, as do Haig and Langer. Whether practised in a group, alone or in combination, "Lectio is about transformation," says Barckert.

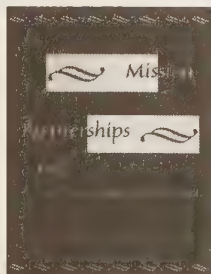
It is "like rain falling on a dry and weary land," Haig adds. "I've been astonished by how eagerly people have embraced the practice. They say it is a way of making the Scriptures personal, a living word." **R**

Judy Dearborn Nill is a free-lance writer who lives in Kent, Washington.

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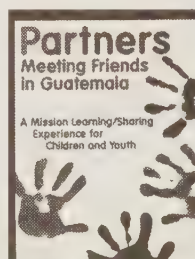
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friends in need

by Jan Johnson

Carol could never catch up financially. Before she could pay all the rent, food and child care, her purse was empty. As we became friends, I often found her staring into an empty refrigerator and crying over her broken marriage. She was a teacher, but she didn't manage money well and she was too devastated by her divorce to care.

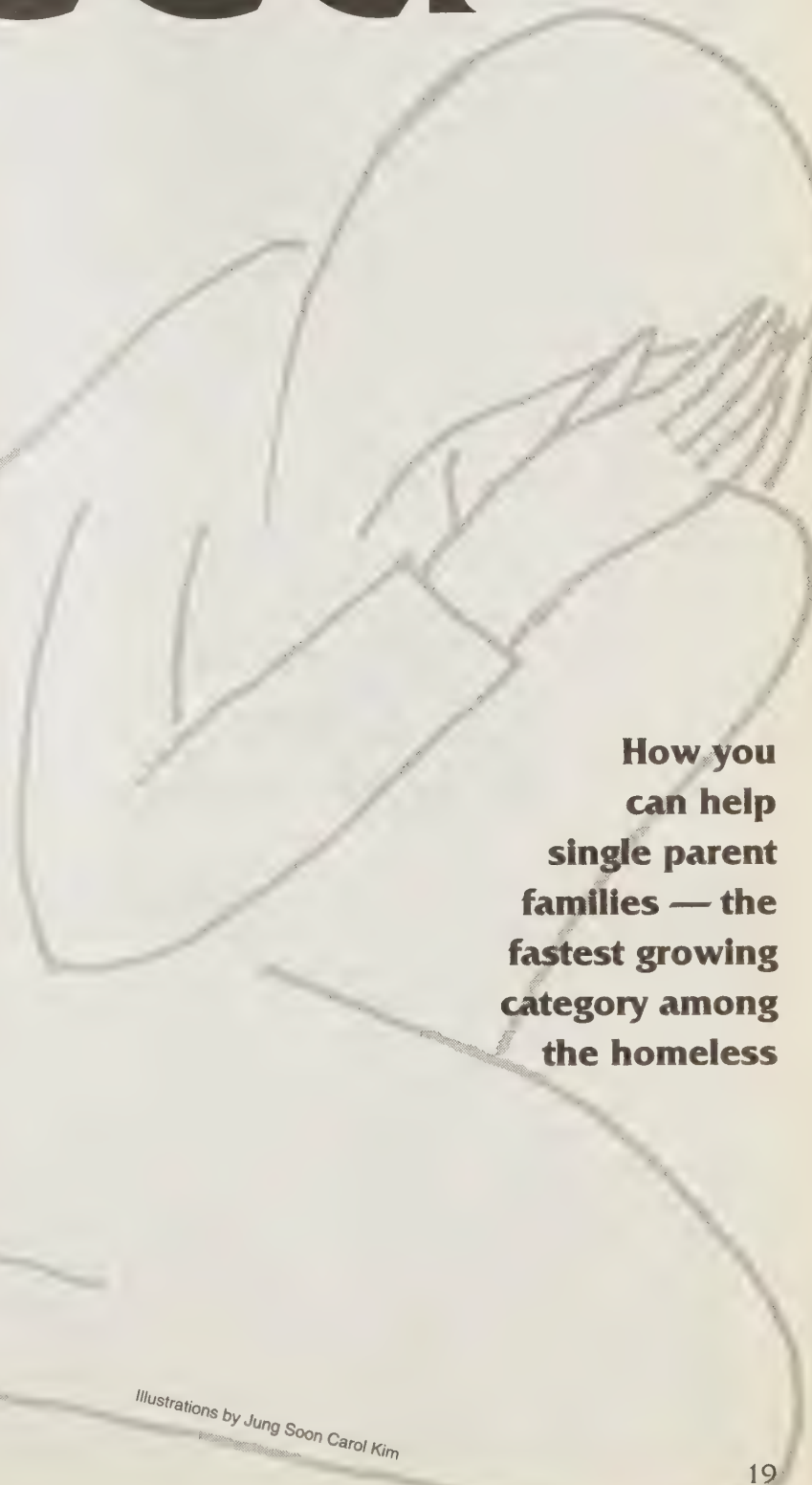
In the summer, she taught summer school; but, when it was over in July, she couldn't find a temporary job that co-ordinated with child care and bus schedules. So I tried to help. I paid her to watch my children. I brought her food. I encouraged her to study for a state teaching credential test so she could get a job in a higher paying public school. Beyond that, I was stumped.

When I read in the newspaper that single parent families are the fastest growing category among the homeless, I suddenly realized Carol and her children were likely candidates. How could I be concerned enough to write a cheque to a downtown mission but not sensitive enough to recognize a friend who soon could become a resident there? I had stereotyped the homeless person as a drunken man living on skid row; but that's not so.

Several scenarios lead to homelessness. A family can't find affordable housing after their older building is torn down, so they live in their car. A waitress goes on medical leave but can't survive on sick pay without tips. A nurse's aid can't afford child care for her three children, so she leaves them alone at night while she works — she is reported to the Children's Aid Society.

Many of us are so busy, we don't see the financial problems of those around us. My friend Marguerite didn't understand how desperate her neighbours were until someone bought their house at a foreclosure auction. "I remember the husband lost his job, but I never dreamed it was that bad," she told me. "I've tried to find out what happened to them, but no one knows,"

A survey of 87 homeless mothers by Harvard Medical School and the University of Southern California points out circumstances these women had in common. Based



**How you
can help
single parent
families — the
fastest growing
category among
the homeless**

Illustrations by Jung Soon Carol Kim

on their findings, here are some phrases we might hear in a friendly conversation with a potentially homeless neighbour, friend or church member:

- *Buzz words:* "My husband [wife] is leaving me" or "I just moved here." One-third of the surveyed mothers became homeless due to a broken relationship, another third because they were evicted and another third because they tried to relocate.
- *Buzz words:* "I can pay for everything but child care." Three-quarters of the surveyed mothers could not find affordable day care. Until three-year-old Charlie started school, Carol's day-care bills saddled her.
- *Buzz words:* "I barely knew my parents" or "My family can't help."

esteem had slipped so much she was lethargic at home and on the job. She used up her sick days and more with her own illnesses and her children's. She was rehired that fall on probation.

The problem of homelessness can be so overwhelming we think only "professionals" in inner-city missions are equipped to deal with these problems. But Jan McDougall, director of Bethel Haven Residence for Women in downtown Los Angeles, believes the church is the highway around skid row. "It's that committed network of people who already know potentially homeless persons who can help the most — before they get down here," she says.

Carol's problems opened my eyes to the need for prevention as well as for a

need clerical and custodial help too.

Ask potentially homeless friends to rethink their family options. Can an aunt or in-law move in and trade room and board for child care? McDougall points out that many times people in this situation are estranged from family members who would help if they knew there was a problem. Probe to see if they can patch things up with their families.

Those who work regularly with homeless people can direct us to resources. Call large churches in your area that have staffpersons who specialize in this area and can answer telephone requests about available programs. Some churches publish their own classified ads or bulletin boards that feature used furniture, jobs and quality day care. Ask your city councillors to supply a social services resource list.

Be an Encourager

Here are some other ways you can bring hope to those feeling discouraged by their situation.

Be a friend. If you try to help neighbours, acquaintances or even a local bag lady, the first step is to be a friend. Viewing them as peers instead of as "needy people" builds their self-esteem and boosts their outlook.

On Carol's birthday, my husband watched her children while I took her out for cheesecake. It seemed frivolous in light of her serious needs, but she loved it. "I feel so special," she whispered and hugged me.

Validate people. McDougall believes lack of self-esteem is a major problem. "Almost every woman I work with has been emotionally, sexually or physically abused by a family member." This is true of many homeless men as well. One way we can help is to point out the person's good qualities.

Don't expect miracles. Understand that some days a potentially homeless person may want to work on problems and other days feel hopeless. Carol studied for her credential test sporadically. I learned to praise her for her confident moments and walk with her through the discouraging ones.

Find support. A family's personal and medical problems may be more than you can handle. Shelters and self-help groups



**the church is
the highway
around skid row**

Forty-three per cent of the interviewed women were runaways or had been placed in foster or institutional care as children (one-third had been abused as children). More than a third of the women had deceased parents and many had no siblings. Carol's parents were dead; her brother helped her once but refused to help her again.

- *Buzz words:* "I know I can handle a job, but nothing seems to work out." Sixty per cent of the women had at least a high school education, but two-thirds hadn't held a job for longer than a month. It never occurred to me that Carol could be nearly homeless because she has a master's degree. What I didn't understand was that her self-

cure for the problem of homelessness. Here are some suggestions on how you can help.

Be a Resource Person

People with financial problems can get so discouraged they aren't good at digging up job training programs or subsidized child care. Even though we may not be able to offer direct assistance, we can ask friends and others where to find help.

Ask friends if they know someone who is selling a reliable used car or who rents inexpensive apartments. They may know about employers who offer child care, such as universities and hospitals. A person in need may not qualify for a professional job, but these institutions

for alcoholics, spouses of alcoholics and battered women are often listed in the telephone book. Some missions offer free clinics. Some churches offer free counselling.

Share Christ. "Drug pushers are bold and courageous," says McDougall. "We need to be courageous, too. I always tell people that God loves them and then give them further teaching as needed." Since Carol already knew the Lord, I tried to remind her that God loves her without giving her pat answers.

Don't Try to Do It All

McDougall differentiates between the homeless person who wants help and the "street person" who doesn't. "Some street people are there by choice because they like the excitement and the freedom," says McDougall. "Most homeless families, however, are people who have lost their jobs and ability of cope. They have goals, and they'll use whatever help you give them as a stepping stone to greater things."

I wasn't this wise when I tried to help

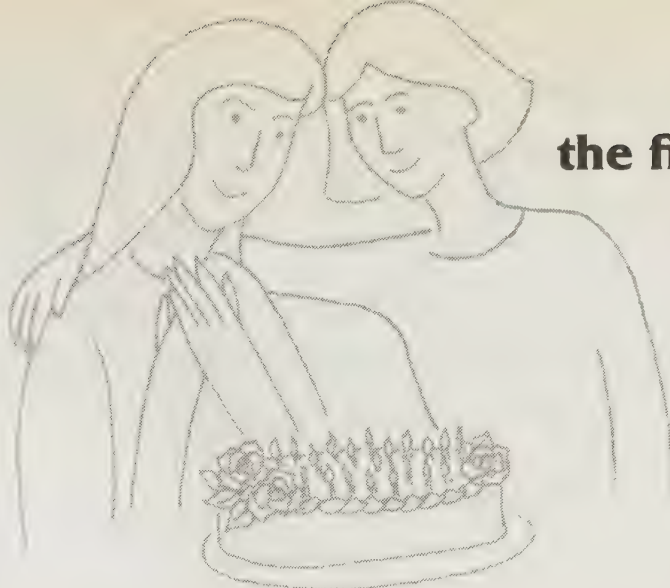
our local bag lady. I gave her food and suggested local shelters. Sometimes, we only talked. Later, I found out she gave the food away and never tried the shelter. Now, I recognize her as the "street person" McDougall described. I still talk with her but I understand she doesn't want my help.

You might want to enlist another church friend or couple to help so you're not the sole emotional support for your friends in need. I got involved with Carol

because my friend, Jamie, who was Carol's co-worker, asked me to pray for Carol. Together, we consoled Carol through her divorce and encouraged her to get a generous child support settlement. Thankfully, her ex-husband paid it on time and Carol survived.

Helping someone in need is like any ministry — you receive a lot in return. **B**

Jan Johnson is a retreat speaker and author of *Enjoying the Presence of God* (NavPress).



**the first step
is to be
a friend**

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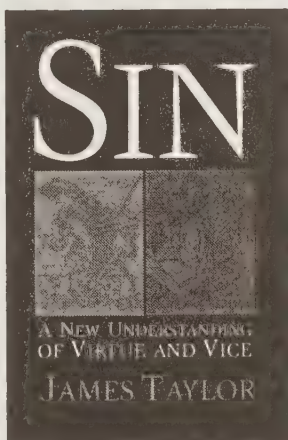
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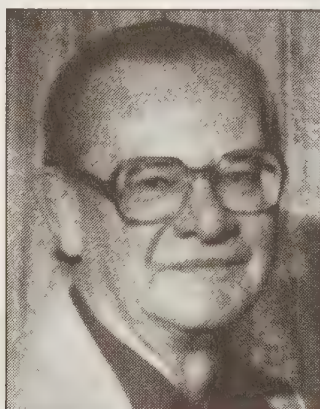
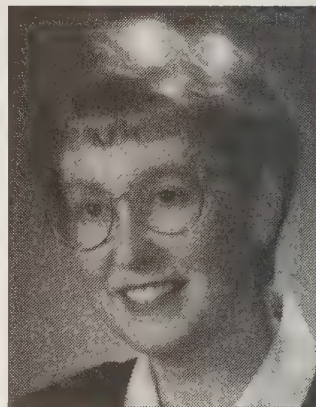
co-minister, St. Andrew's Church, Calgary; former president of the Association of Presbyterian Church Educators

No. Canada is a country of religious diversity. Government funding for religious schools would need to take this diversity into account, including non-Christian faith communities.

Presbyterians need to support government-funded public education that reclaims religion and spirituality as valued and integral expressions of human life and living.

Presbyterians need to take seriously the biblical mandate of being, through God's grace, "salt" in the world. This includes our children, youth and adults living out their Christian faith in educational settings.

Presbyterians need to claim the centrality of church and home as the primary locations of Christian faith formation. It is our responsibility to provide a solid foundation for the living of Christian faith in an indifferent and increasingly antagonistic world.



Don Hazell

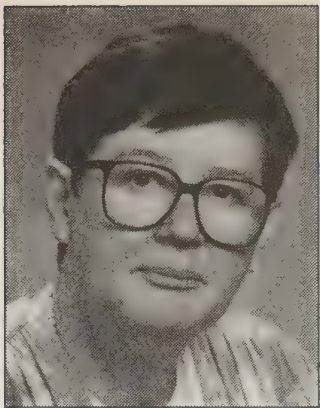
elder, St. Mark's Church, Don Mills, Ont.; former principal and superintendent of education in Toronto

Without a framework of religious belief, the study of most academic subjects is incomplete and sometimes irrelevant. The separate schools are constitutionally empowered to provide formal religious instruction and to integrate their beliefs into every aspect of a child's education. In contrast, the public schools with their wide diversity of religious and cultural backgrounds cannot provide this religious structure. Some parents,

at considerable personal expense, have opted for private, religious schools. Should these costs be born by the province?

In 1985, the directors of education for Ontario submitted a proposal for "umbrella" boards of education with responsibility for public, separate and French language schools. They would have representation from each group and draw from a common tax base. The boards would administer a variety of schools, subject to provincial regulations and curriculum but free to develop their own instructional model.

I submit that, where numbers warrant, religious schools could be included under such an umbrella, at little or no additional cost to taxpayers.



Catherine Campbell

minister, Melville Church, Brussels, and Knox, Belgrave, Ontario; served on the public school board in Brampton, Ont.

John Strachan, Anglican (né Presbyterian), and Egerton Ryerson, Methodist, the shaping forces of education in Ontario, wanted accessible, universal education for all children. Funding charter schools or Christian schools or Islamic schools or even atheist schools begins a pattern that will have an impact on the larger society. Factionalism becomes the internalized norm.

Our churches have a responsibility to our children, and should vigorously support a public education system as well as their church school programs and staff. Churches should show the inclusiveness of Christ in wanting all to share equally. They should ensure that our education system reflects that.

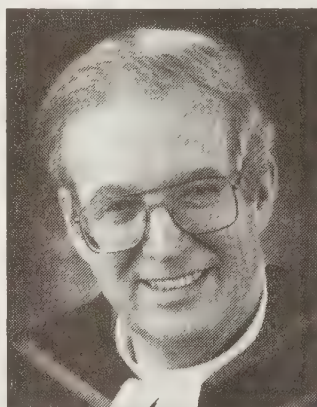
John Johnston

retired minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada; serves on the public school board in Hamilton, Ont.

Canadian Presbyterians understand Christian education as primarily the role of home and church, with the 3 Rs traditionally taught in government-operated public (not religious) schools where various ages study within one all-embracing system.

Public schools today enrol students from a myriad of inter-racial, -cultural and -religious backgrounds. While indoctrination by any religious group continues to be forbidden in Ontario public schools, education about religion is supported by the provincial government and the Presbyterian Church. Our Presbyterian Inter-Synod Committee on Public and Private Education has worked with the Ecumenical Study Commission in recently publishing an opening exercises volume in which 80 pages of Christian material is being made available to elementary schools.

Canadians who live and work together should also learn side-by-side in our pluralistic society. Tax dollars should not support religious schools which do not reflect this unity in diversity in today's society.



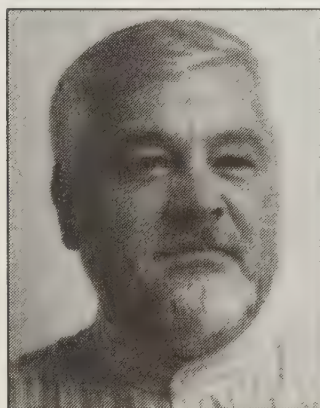
Yme Woensdregt

in team ministry, First Church, Regina; served on the committee to revise the recently published Book of Praise

Schools are not neutral places. Values are taught in both public and private schools. The question is, What values do we wish our children to learn?

It seems to me that, in a time of pluralism, two key values are respect and tolerance. We don't learn them automatically. We need to be more pro-active about it.

Religious schools, which attempt to keep students separate from other cultures and religions, seem to me



to work against this. On the other hand, public schools must be more willing to make room in the curriculum for helping students understand the quest of the human spirit for faith in all its forms. Students can discuss religious differences and learn to respect those who hold different beliefs.

Separate schools funded by governments? Not for this Presbyterian. **[R]**

In Winter

Bare arms of trees
conduct the wind
as if it is music —
from those raw branches,
the whispered notes
bellow me like echoes
of old prayer,
like all things remembered
and wished for,
like waves of light
bending and flowing
into the past,
toward the future,
but never quite
abandoning me here
to their shadow —

— John Grey

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The View From the Pews

by Ivor Williams

His clothes comfortably rumpled and his voice hoarse, both the result of days of travel and visiting, William Klempa squeezed out an extra day and a half to share his vision and concerns about Presbyterianism with Presbyterians in the London, Ontario, area. It was evident he had brought to the post of Moderator of the 124th General Assembly what he termed the three Gs: Grit, Grace and Gumption.

For that day and a half, in conversation, in lecture and in response to questions at Westmount Presbyterian Church in London, Klempa proved his grit in trying to be "forthright in my approach to issues." His gumption was evident in trying "to contact all presbyteries and speak about our problems as Presbyterians." As for his grace, "It may be best for others to decide if the Moderator conducts himself with it," he smiled.

"I've been speaking about the problems facing our church as we enter a new century," he said, "and about the recovery of the teaching ministry of our church."

"Do you really think Presbyterianism in Canada is worth saving?" someone asked.

"Yes," was the firm answer. "We have a great contribution to make to the life and culture of Canada," he said with conviction. "We have a strong emphasis on the sovereignty of God, and that emphasis is needed. We probably should de-emphasize the institutional aspect of worship and religion, and emphasize the appeal of the Christian gospel."

How can the church in Canada be strengthened?

We may not be succeeding in training our ministers sufficiently in the Scriptures, the Moderator responded. "But it is not only the responsibility of the ministry. All of us must participate."

The record of Presbyterians in Canada is rather a sad one, Klempa suggested. "We must almost begin all over again." He cited the lack of knowledge of the gospels and creeds among undergraduate students at McGill University. "This alarming ignorance is a big part of the problem because our people now do not know the basis of their faith as Presbyterians used to. We must recover our heritage which has its very roots in the Reformation," the Moderator pleaded. "We must be in dialogue with our roots, or we won't be Presbyterians."

What should our church be doing? he was asked.

Many in Canada are reasonably pleased with the current direction of the church, but they also have great concern about the loss of youth in the congregations, he replied. "We have an abysmal record of holding on to our youth and must do better in our instruction about our faith."

The position of Moderator allows the incumbent to become familiar with the work of the church and issues in society with which he sees an intimate connection. He spoke with concern and passion about the persecution of Christians in the Sudan, about which he has written to

Prime Minister Chrétien. And there are many other humanitarian issues which must concern Canadian Presbyterians. He hopes that a meeting he plans to convene of all past Moderators will face these issues and suggest the direction of the church in the next century.

Has the role of the pastor changed?

"The pastor has become a sort of facilitator. But it is helpful and even necessary if the facilitator is also the leader," Klempa suggested. He said congregations must understand faith issues more clearly and be prepared to give an account of themselves to other members, their neighbours, colleagues at work and family.

Klempa took the Monday night listeners through a history of Presbyterianism. He pointed out how various statements and creeds had been developed, leading them into a discussion of *Living Faith* and its acceptance as a subordinate standard. He reviewed its content, comparing it loosely to a catechism. "It is such a pity," he said, "that we have departed from the widespread use of a catechism." It would help give a comprehensive view of our Christian faith.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada's own catechism may be presented to the next General Assembly, he announced. Catechisms have a long history in the church as statements of faith in question-and-answer form. They are meant to be used, though not necessarily memorized. Earlier creeds and statements of faith

**A Moderator's
visit seen
through the eyes
of someone
in the pew**

have not been discarded or set aside; but a more contemporary statement was necessary for today's church, he commented. While *Living Faith* itself may one day give way to a newer statement, it will still be a milestone in the church's history.

Two major challenges, among all the others, face the church as it nears the new millennium, the Moderator told the audience. The first is to become a more

Several Canadian successes in reaching out to the unchurched can encourage us, but such a strategy "must be continued with prayer and purpose."

The second challenge, he suggested, is to "instruct our people in their faith" so they can reach out to those no longer connected to the church. He said it would not be enough merely to recover the church's central position, but also its

concerns for the church. He was asked to discuss *Living Faith* in particular, which led to a gentle "lecture" on Presbyterian history and its future. There was no misunderstanding the Moderator's carefully chosen words.

It would appear difficult for this pastor turned educator, and likely about to return to the pastorate, to divorce himself from his recently abandoned academic

**"We must almost begin all over again ...
... our people now do not know
the basis of their faith as Presbyterians used to"**

mission-minded church. Reminding the group that The Presbyterian Church in Canada is approaching its 125th anniversary with declining membership, he cited the example of the church in Korea which has grown to a membership of 10,000,000 in 100 years. "It is a faithful church," he said, "that reaches out to the community and is deeply Bible-minded."

teaching ministry. "We must almost begin again," he repeated.

The evening gathering at which Klempa spoke replaced the Westmount congregation's regular Monday evening Bible study group. Invitations were sent to the presbytery and beyond, with the result that a large congregation assembled to hear the Moderator discuss his

career as a teacher and principal of The Presbyterian College in Montreal. If the day and a half at Westmount is any indication, that is fortunate for The Presbyterian Church in Canada. **R**

Ivor Williams is a writer, a member of Westmount Church, London, Ont., and a contributing editor of this magazine.

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The Stuff We Leave Behind

by Phil Callaway



Well, I finally did it. After years of checking out prices, I finally talked myself into buying one. After years of admiring those tiny leaves and gnarled branches, I mustered up the courage to bring one home. It sits in my living room window now. Soaking up the sun's rays. Reaching out for moisture. And growing ... ever so slowly.

I didn't know they existed until I watched a movie called *The Karate Kid*. The wise old master pruned and wired and clipped away; then, one day, presented a lonely and mistreated boy with an ancient tree 10 inches tall. The tree spoke to the boy of endurance, of perseverance, of growth — things he would need to bring the movie to a happy end. Since then, I've wanted a bonsai tree for myself. But they looked too much like work (all that wiring and clipping). They looked too much like money (some were as much as \$1,000). A few months ago, however, I found a small one for only \$16; it made no sense to leave it in the store.

Please understand, I wasn't born with a green thumb. In fact, if you have a plant you don't like, give it to me. I don't know what it is: I can water and weed with the best of them, but plants still die. I'm determined that things will be different with this little tree. Some nights, after the kids are tucked in, you'll find me with the perfect pruning instrument (my

wife's fingernail clippers), carefully snipping, trimming and wiring until it's all I can see when I close my eyes.

If the woman who sold me this tree is correct, a well-cared for bonsai tree should last a few hundred years. "Even longer than me," I told her. So I'll keep snipping, trimming and wiring; and, perhaps, this tree will be around long after I've hung up the fingernail clippers. Of course, I'd like to leave behind a little more than a gnarled old tree; but, after a story I heard this morning, I'm wondering what could be more important.

Last summer, an acquaintance of mine took his 12-year-old son on a weekend fishing trip. The purpose was to teach the boy the facts of life. To let him know the wonderful joys of married love. "Sex is a gift from God to be celebrated and saved for the one you marry,"

he told his son as they stood waist-deep in a crystal clear stream, casting flies after rainbow trout.

The boy had no reason to doubt him. Not until a month later, when his dad walked out the front door with the same suitcase he'd taken along on that fishing trip. He left behind a devastated family. He left behind the awful truth: for over a year, he'd been having an affair with a married woman. His boy may never be the same.

Since I heard the news, I've been thinking about the stuff we leave behind. You see, whether we like it or not, the impact we make is rarely determined by the words we say but by the life we live. Those who impact us most are not those who preach to us, but those who live their lives quietly, gracefully and faithfully, like the stars in the heavens.

Those who impact us most are those who live their lives quietly, gracefully and faithfully

Later this week, I'm going back to that store. Later this week, I'll buy three more bonsai trees. One for each of my kids. Perhaps, years from now in some far-off place, they'll be able to look at a bonsai tree basking in their living room window and think of their dad.

My son Stephen is 11 now. Going on 12. Soon to be 18. On his 18th birthday, I plan to present him with a bonsai tree. Long after that birthday, he'll still have that tree. Long after my words have stopped ringing in his ears, he'll have a small reminder of the stuff that mattered to me. I pray that the tree will speak to him of character. Of perseverance. Of faithfulness. I hope it will remind him that, although I had my share of twists and bends, his father grew strong and faithful. Under the caring hand of the Master. **R**

Phil Callaway is editor of *Prairie Bible Institute's Servant* magazine. His new book *Making Life Rich Without Any Money* (see Reviews, December 1998 *Record*) was released in July.



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Saint Lucien?

by Joseph C. McLelland

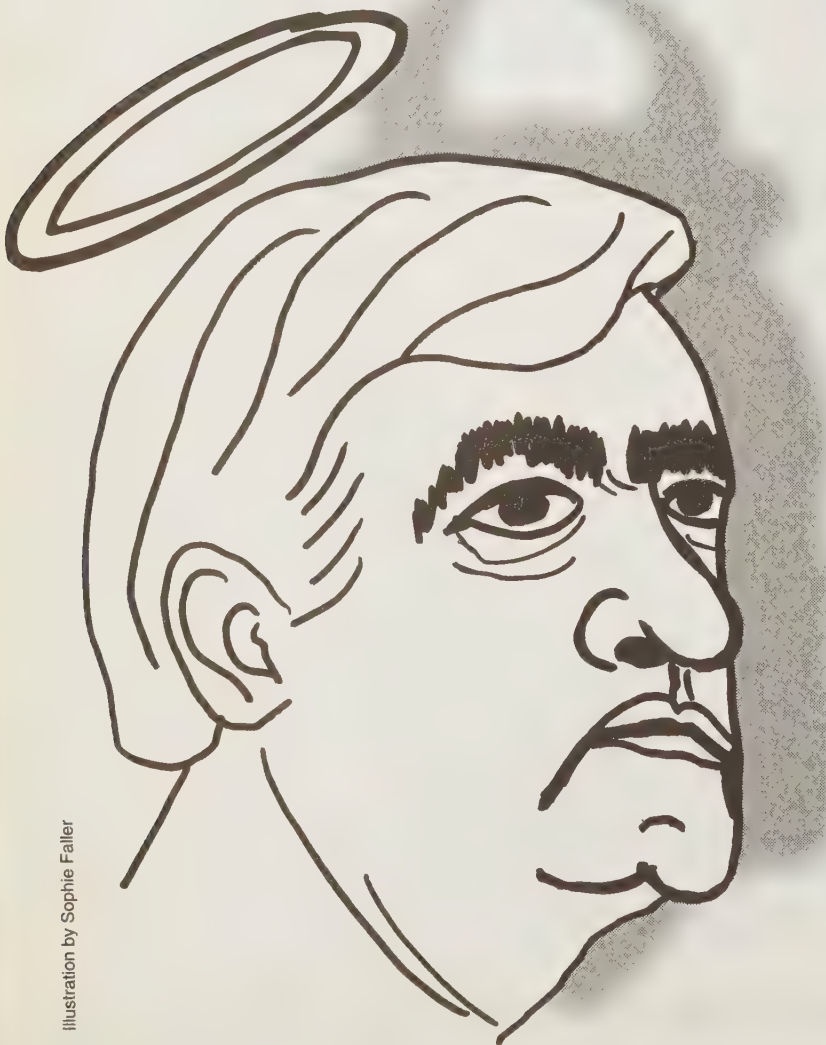


Illustration by Sophie Faller

Antoine Dumas is a Québec artist and federalist. He captures our national dilemma in several canvases. *Troubled Waters* shows a canoe with British and French captains at either end, half the paddlers facing one way and half the other. *New Quebecker* casts the modern Québécois as Atlas, holding up the world he now controls. Our recent provincial election illustrates Canada's polarization: Lucien Bouchard, almost demonized in the Rest of Canada (ROC), is almost sanctified here.

The election campaign brought out the familiar figures in our highly politicized "nation." The reigning *Péquistes* ran on their record. This may seem bizarre since our employment rate dropped to "only" 9.7 per cent (compared to 8.1 for all Canada), our economy "grew" by 2.7 per cent (3.7 in all Canada), and our taxes remain the highest in North America. But zero deficit has control, along with promises to reverse the recent drastic cuts to social programs.

Meanwhile, the Liberals ran a one-issue campaign, promising an end to our neverendum-referendum (with Ghostbuster logo to match). Bouchard asked us to "trust" his party (*j'ai confiance*), downplaying the referendum as something to happen only under "winning conditions." Jean Charest, the anglophone's Captain Canada, gradually lost ground to Bouchard. The TV debate was stolen from both leaders by young Mario Dumont, leader of a single-seat party but shrewd in playing off the other two as basically the same — offering little to youth and social conscience. (In fact, all three parties look like traditional "conservatives" with limited social awareness.)

Our citizens are divided along linguistic lines, now mirrored in our new school boards: the old Roman Catholic and Protestant boards have been replaced by French and English boards. Anglophones are notoriously concerned about the diminishing of their institutions, particularly schools, hospitals and churches. We've learned to live with harsh language laws guaranteeing "a French face" — sometimes distorting reality, as when boxes of matzoh, sold only during Passover, were confiscated because they lacked French wording. We remember it was the Liberal government that instituted these laws to woo the francophone majority, and that Charest supports our "linguistic peace." He also adopts such nationalist dogmas as Unilateral Declaration of Independence, given a 51 per cent majority referendum, and rejects the idea of partition which claims that if Canada is divisible, so is Québec.

Perception is all. Most anglophones feel threatened and stressed, while francophones are more sanguine about the future. Anglos dread another referendum,

Reflecting on the Quebec election

given the close call of 1995, helped by a diffident ROC — up to the last-minute monster rally. They clearly don't want another. Francophones distinguish *election* from *referendum* — whether or not Bouchard's "winning conditions" are achieved. This suits the 60 per cent who don't want a referendum at all (even more don't want secession, according to recent polls) and the hard-line nationalists who demand one. The latter applaud Parizeau's blunt talk about Québec's knife-at-the-throat stance, getting as much "loot" as possible and "milking" the Canadian cow.

Ambiguity abounds. Bouchard claims to "respect" Canada, yet calls it "not a real country." This head of a sovereignist government wants to join in reforming the Canadian "social union." It defies logic — improving something you intend to destroy. But such doublespeak doesn't affect his popularity. One columnist observed that, like Céline Dion and Jacques Villeneuve, Lucien Bouchard is untouchable, beyond criticism. "Saint" Lucien flirts with renewed federalism, yet his party has January 1, 2001, targeted for independence.

Once again, uncertainty continues. Will our péquiste government attend to social problems or become preoccupied with the winning conditions for another referendum as the party's Article One states? Will it recognize the anomaly of our faulty riding system in being elected with a majority of seats but only a minority (43 per cent) of the popular vote? Bouchard's election night speech was bolder than was seemly, but the next day's press conference showed a chastened leader acknowledging a mandate to govern, with referendum on hold. He promised to co-operate with the other premiers in pursuing the Saskatoon agreement on Canada's social union.

We presume Lucien is neither saint nor demon, simply a fallen human being like the rest of us, both gifted and flawed, with insights and errors ... Yet, it's the *power* that counts. And as Lord Acton reminded us, "All power corrupts ..." **R**

Joseph C. McLelland is professor emeritus of McGill University and The Presbyterian College, Montreal, and a contributing editor of this magazine.

FROM THE MODERATOR

(Continued from page 4)

Sang-yun brought portions of it to Korea and gathered the first group of worshipping Protestants in 1883. Dr. Horace Allen, an American Presbyterian physician, arrived in 1884; Rev. H. G. Underwood, a Presbyterian, and Rev. H. G. Appenzeller, a Methodist, went in 1885.

The Canadian Korean Mission

The first Canadians to enter Korea were four young men from Toronto: James Gale, Malcolm Fenwick, Robert Hardie and Oliver Avison. Persuaded to undertake missionary work by the Student Volunteer Movement, they arrived in 1888-89. Rev. William J. McKenzie, "the lone ranger from the Maritimes," arrived in 1893. He was supported financially by friends of Korea in the Atlantic Synod. He died of malnutrition 18 months later, one week before the dedication of the church he worked so hard to build.

McKenzie's death profoundly stirred the Atlantic Synod. The Woman's Foreign Missionary Society made a strong case before the church's Foreign Mission Committee for opening Korean work. A nine-hour debate ensued at the 1897 synod meeting and concluded with a resounding vote in favour of a Canadian Korean Mission. Dr. Robert Grierson, William Rufus Foote and Duncan McRae were appointed. These three men, along with Mrs. Grierson and Mrs. Foote, became the pioneers of the Canadian Korean Mission. In 1900, Louise McCully from Truro, Nova Scotia, became the church's first woman missionary in Korea.

The Canadian Korean Mission grew rapidly. It followed the method of Dr. John Nevius, stressing Bible classes for all Christians, the training of leaders and laypeople to be witnesses for Christ, self-support, self-government and exemplary moral behaviour enforced by strict church discipline. Two events stand out in Korean church growth: the great revival of 1907 and the independence movement of 1919 during the Japanese occupation. Christians identified with the Korean independence movement and won nationwide respect. A spreading

network of Christian hospitals and colleges also broadened the Christian witness. The end of the Second World War ushered in a second period of expansion and, in the past 50 years, there has been dramatic Christian growth.

Lessons to Be Learned

The Korean example has many lessons for us. First, Korean Presbyterian churches are mission-minded, reaching out by word and deed in evangelistic mission to the Korean people. There is a strong emphasis on Bible study and on every Christian being a witness. The main work of evangelism is to be done by Christian converts who have found the Christian faith too rich a possession to keep to themselves.

Secondly, William Stacy Johnson, who recently visited Korea, writes, "The church in Korea is a worshipping, believing church that centres itself in prayer." The Myung Sung church in Seoul holds four early-morning prayer services that begin at the crack of dawn. In a day when we flirt with new liturgies and the dumbing-down of the sermon, Korean churches thrive using a simple liturgy of hymns, prayers and a biblical sermon.

Thirdly, the emphasis is on making Christians and not simply new church members who will help pay off the mortgage. The church in Korea is an obedient church that seeks to hear the word of God and to embody God's purposes in life. It was founded among an oppressed people and it has been a suffering, persecuted church. Thus, it has not distanced itself from the people and their sufferings.

Canadian Presbyterians thank God for what he has done in Korea and for the centennial of the Canadian Korean Mission. The example of Korean Christianity exhorts us to seek not our glory but God's glory. It also raises the question whether The Presbyterian Church in Canada has fallen from that high mission-minded height of 1897 when the Atlantic Synod voted to initiate Christian work in Korea.

Bice Klempa

Faces of Faith



Milan Opočenský was born in Czechoslovakia in 1931 and studied Protestant theology in Prague (1950-54). He became a lecturer at the Comenius Faculty of Protestant Theology in Prague. From 1960-68, he served as chair of the youth commission of the Christian Peace Conference. From 1967-73, he served as European secretary of the World Student Christian Federation. From 1973-89, he was professor of Christian social ethics at the Comenius Faculty in Prague. Honorary degrees were conferred on him by the Protestant Faculty in Brussels, the College of Wooster (Ohio) and the Theological Academy in Debrecen, Hungary. He is also a Fellow of the Center of Theological Inquiry in Princeton, New Jersey. Opočenský has been general secretary of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches since 1989.

What is the main purpose of your work in the World Alliance of Reformed Churches?

To strengthen the witness of Reformed churches around the world

What is your earliest memory of church life?

I grew up in a manse. My father was a pastor and my parents were often invited to wedding parties. The conviviality of these parties in the congregation is my first recollection of church life.

What is your favourite biblical book, and why?

The second epistle to the Corinthians indicates the ambiguity of a Christian journey and of life in a community (II Corinthians 4:7-12; 6:3-10).

What book (outside of the Bible) has most influenced you?

Augustine's *Confessions*, one of the first autobiographies — candid, honest and spiritually profound

What musical piece has most inspired you?

Beethoven's *9th Symphony in D Minor*. It inspires us to seek the peaks of human existence.

Where do you find inspiration to sustain your faith?

Prayers with my wife, reading the Bible and interaction with Reformed churches around the world. I often read the Moravian Daily Texts.

Who has played a major role in your faith journey?

My mother was the first woman to study theology in Czechoslovakia (1922-25). When my father was in a concentration camp in Dachau (1942-45), my mother led the congregation although she was not ordained. She has inspired me by her faith, courage and endurance. During my studies, I was deeply impressed by our theological teacher, J. L. Hromádka, who taught us to witness to Jesus Christ in a Marxist society.

If you could invite anyone (past or present) to a dinner party, whom would you invite?

Socrates, Plato, Augustine, Francis of Assisi, John Hus, Peter Chelčický, Calvin, Comenius, T. G. Masaryk, Gandhi, J. L. Hromádka, Karl Barth, Mother Teresa, Nelson Mandela

What is your biggest regret?

During my stay abroad, I was not informed my mother was dying; so I could not be at her bedside.

What do you find most irritating about the church?

The church does not usually regard "worldly" issues as its own agenda. The church often swims with the fashions of the day. At times, the church is triumphalistic and arrogant, but not prophetic.

What one change in the church would make it substantially better?

We should renounce power, prestige and domination; and we should become a humble, poor and serving church.

If you could live a second time, who would you like to be?

I would like to be a Protestant pastor and teacher of theology again.

Write your own epitaph.

Hope does not disappoint



Going Home, Leaving Home

The words of that old spiritual haunt me at this time of year: "Swing low, sweet chariot, comin' for to carry me home...." I've spent a wonderful month at home with my family for Christmas, and I am going home to England soon. That's the paradox: they're both my home.

I love coming home for Christmas. Even if I had to borrow money, somehow I would find a way to pay the plane fare to Canada. It's often an incredibly busy time — seeing family and friends I haven't seen in months, visiting all my old haunts, participating in all the Christmas traditions. And I know I never get nearly as much work done as I should. (Yes, some of the books I lugged home on my back — so I didn't have to pay extra luggage costs for my suitcase — are returning to England unread.) But I wouldn't miss it for the world. It's my home.

But I'm going home now. Back to my life, my friends, my boyfriend. The little space I have created in my room that is mine alone. My work, my books, my music. The paths I walk in the park when my room gets too small. My favourite gargoyles that leer and wink at me on my way to class.

When I'm in England, I say "back home" meaning Canada. When I'm in Canada, I say "home" meaning England. In Oxford, I miss my family, my Canadian friends, real hot chocolate, snow, taco spice, cheap meals out, huge grocery stores and wide open spaces. In Waterloo, I miss my Oxford friends, my books, my studies, my independence and the lovely old buildings of the university.

Going home, leaving home. It's a double-edged sword. I have the best of both worlds, but also the worst of both worlds. My life is never quite

complete. I have two lives really; I pick up one thread during term-time, another during holidays. (I even have two photo albums because it makes more sense keeping all the England pictures together and all the Canadian ones together.) I'm always missing something or someone. I never have everything I love together in one spot. I even feel as if I'm two slightly different people, sometimes; and I get weird looks when I forget and let my England personality slip out when I'm in Canada, or vice versa.

Leaving home, coming home. For me, that is the closest I can come to understanding death.

It's hard for me as a young person to comprehend death. Maybe, as we get older, we get more used to it; maybe not. Death at my age is too often abrupt, tragic, horrifying — an accident, a suicide, a fatal disease. I don't really believe I'm going to die, at least not

anytime soon; nor do I believe any of my friends or family is going to die. And if it happens, I'm not too sure how I'm going to deal with it.

Most of our metaphors about dying, though, are about going home. "I looked over Jordan, and what did I see, comin'

for to carry me home? A band of angels, comin' after me — comin' for to carry me home." We talk about heaven as our real home waiting for us.

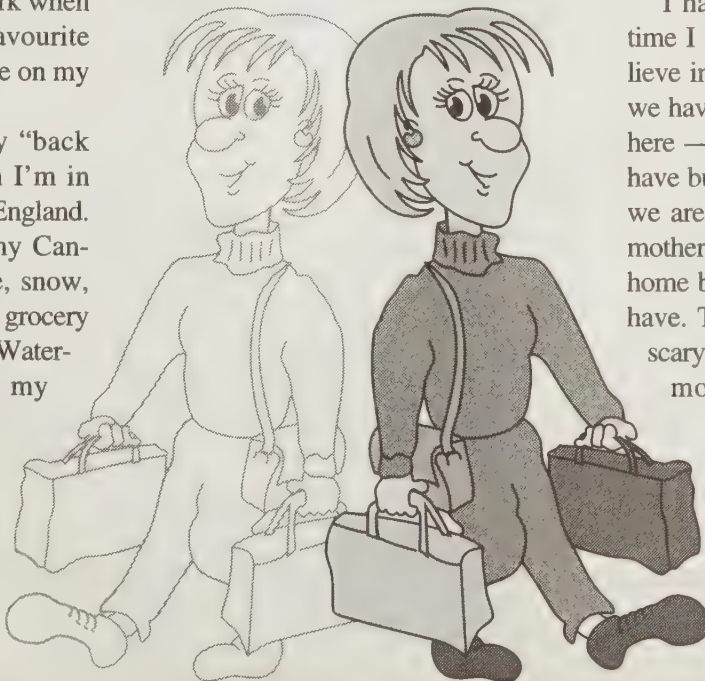
I'm not totally sure I truly believe in heaven, at least not the way it's often described. Sometimes, the

cynical side of me thinks it is something we've made up to make ourselves feel better because we cannot face the possibility of self-annihilation. But most of the time, at least, I believe in *something* — something more, something further — if only because I'm going to be royally furious if I end before I've figured everything out.

I have this bittersweet feeling every time I leave one of my homes. If we believe in heaven, I think this is the feeling we have about death. We leave our home here — the people we love, the lives we have built. The only home we know. Yet, we are going home to our father, to our mother, to all the people who have gone home before us. The life we are meant to have. The only home we need. And it's scary, and sad, and a little exciting and mostly sorrowful. Because we're leaving home, too. **R**

Kathy Cawsey, a member of Knox Church, Waterloo, Ont., is studying at Oxford University. Write to Kathy at: Middle Common Room, Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, England OX2 6QA; by E-mail at: kathleen.cawsey@lmh.ox.ac.uk.

**Every parting,
a foretaste of
death; every
reunion a taste
of heaven**



PCC News

Synod of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario reshapes itself

The Synod of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario met at Westwood Church, Winnipeg, October 23 and 24. Rev. Jean Bryden of First Church, Portage la Prairie, was elected moderator. With the departure of Rev. Raymond Hodgson, Rev. David Wilson was elected clerk commencing December 1, 1998.

A major part of the meeting was the consideration of the future shape of the synod. A notice of motion and an overture from the Presbytery of Winnipeg suggested radical change. On Friday morning, the synod broke into small groups to discuss the options. On Saturday, a consensus proposal was accepted. Beginning after 1999, the synod will meet every two years, normally in Winnipeg. The synod executive has been reshaped to handle business arising between meetings. The main purpose of the synod is study, worship, spiritual renewal and fellowship.

Because of the closing of shared ministry in Leaf Rapids, the synod decided to opt out of the Inter-Church Coalition on Isolated Communities (ICCIC). (The ICCIC itself is to cease, bringing to a close an important chapter

in shared ministry in the North.)

The theme for the synod was "Ministry with Youth and Young Adults." David Overholt, pastor of the Church of the Rock in Hamilton, Ontario, was the guest speaker. One-half of Church of the Rock's 500-600 attendees are high school students. One-quarter are college students. Overholt challenged the assumptions of the commissioners and pushed their limits on what the shape of ministry with these age groups might look like.

At the Friday night banquet, the praise and worship team of the Presbyterian Youth Council led the synod in learning some of the new hymns in the 1997 *Book of Praise*. A presentation was made to Raymond Hodgson, whose resignation as regional staffperson was accepted with regret and with gratitude for his service.

The synod also heard from Rev. Walter McLean of the Celebrate Steering Committee, Mithran Devanesen of Roofs for the Roofless, and Prof. Iain Nicol of Knox College, who led a workshop on future priorities for education for ministry. (From a report by Ray Hodgson)

Healing and celebration highlight Synod of Saskatchewan

Bathed in the balmy breezes of southern Saskatchewan and enthused by its proximity to the Temple Garden Spa, the Synod of Saskatchewan met in St. Mark's Church, Moose Jaw, November 20-21. Rev. Tom Brownlee of Circle West Church, Saskatoon, was elected moderator.

Healing and celebration were highlights of the synod, while uplifting worship and an education component drew everyone together.

Margaret Wilson, educational consultant for Saskatchewan, led a workshop on conflict management, providing biblical observations and guidelines for the resolution of congregational conflict. Rev. Gordon Haynes, associate secretary for Canada Ministries, Life and Mission Agency, shared some good news stories of congregations engaged in ministry and mission from coast to coast. Rev. Walter McLean, convener of the Celebrate Steering Committee, outlined some of the plans for the upcoming Millennium/125th anniversary/Jubilee celebrations. (From a report by Jim McKay)

Presbyterian receives posthumous honour

More than 50 years of volunteer community work were recognized when Archie MacGregor Simpson was honoured posthumously with the Governor General's Caring Canadian Award on November 6. Archie, who died in March 1998, was a former elder, clerk of session, treasurer and charter member of St. Andrew's Church, Kirkland Lake, Ontario, and co-founder of Dorothy Lake Camp. He was a member of the Kiwanis Club, a board member of the Victorian Order of Nurses and a public school trustee. He was also involved with Scouts Canada, the Kirkland and District Figure Skating Club, the Kirkland Lake



Tennis Club and the Children's Treatment Centre of Porcupine.

"He always put the kids first," said Kiwanian Betty Ann LaBerge. "I thought he was just wonderful."

Archie and his wife, Bernice, were married for 51 years and have three children. (From a report in the *Kirkland Lake Gazette*)

Archie Simpson is pictured in 1996 on a Christmas Parade float with Kiwanians Irene Pochopsky and Glenn Carter.

Significant surplus equals wonderful opportunity

As a result of decisions made at the 1997 and 1998 General Assemblies, The Presbyterian Church in Canada has a significant financial surplus. Those Assemblies changed the funding formula for the denominational pension plan in such a way that members and employers would make the total payments required to provide for future pensions for the members. The national church will no longer contribute toward this cost and, therefore, as of the end of 1998, it has a surplus of approximately \$1 million. Furthermore, because the budget for 1999 is also set, there is a potential surplus of \$750,000 from the same source.

A plan is being prepared to use the surplus to fund mission work that has not been completed, projects related to the FLAMES initiative, sites for new congregations and other matters that have been in need of proper funding. This plan will be presented to the Assembly Council in March and then to the General Assembly in June. (Further details are to be available on a bulletin insert early in the new year.)

In a press release, principal clerk Stephen Kendall, chief financial officer Don Taylor and Life and Mission general secretary Ian Morrison described the surplus as "a wonderful opportunity to further Christ's mission in the church and the world in ways of which we have only dreamed."

The nominees are ...

The nominees for Moderator of the 125th General Assembly are: Robert Garvin, minister of Haney Church, Maple Ridge, B.C.; Vern Tozer, senior minister of Knox Church, Listowel, Ontario; and Art Van Seters, principal of Knox College, Toronto. (The *Record* will carry a brief profile of the nominees in the February issue.)

WORLD ALLIANCE OF REFORMED CHURCHES

General Secretary

The World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) is seeking a General Secretary to direct and coordinate its work. Candidates will have a firm commitment to the Reformed faith; appropriate theological training; demonstrated skills in team-work, management and communication; commitment to the ecumenical movement; familiarity with current international issues; and sensitivity to cultural and theological diversity, gender issues and youth concerns. Fluency in English is a requirement; knowledge of French, German and/or Spanish would be an advantage.

WARC links over 75 million people in 214 Congregational, Presbyterian, Reformed and United churches in 105 countries around the world. Its purposes are to strengthen the unity and witness of Reformed churches; to interpret the Reformed tradition; to work for economic and social justice, inclusive community and the integrity of the environment; and to promote dialogue with other Christian communions and other religions.

The appointment will be made in July 1999, and the successful candidate will take up the appointment on March 1, 2000.

If you are interested in applying for this position, please send your résumé, with the names of three referees, to: Rev. Elizabeth Nash, 1, Edwards Lane, Nottingham NG3 5GF, United Kingdom. Further information may be obtained from the same address. **Closing date for applications: February 28, 1999.**

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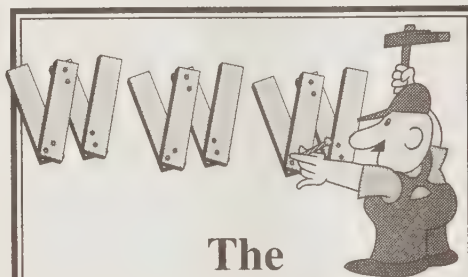
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NEWS

Presbytery demands redress for fired worker

The Presbytery of East Toronto is presenting an overture to the General Assembly calling for a commission to look into all aspects of the dismissal of Lee McKenna duCharme. She was fired as associate secretary for Justice Ministries in April 1997.

Among the charges made in the overture, adopted by the presbytery on December 1, is that the general secretary and the convener of the Life and Mission Agency have offered "no legitimate or credible cause for [her] dismissal" and that "no acceptable reason has been offered to the church in the interim, despite repeated requests from across the country." The overture further states that the 123rd General Assembly dismissed discussion on this issue in the belief that it was under litigation which, according to the overture, "was, always has been and continues to be untrue."

Although the Life and Mission Agency believes it has met the minimum requirements of employment standards in Ontario, the overture declares "the church is called to a higher standard" which should model Jesus Christ in terms of "justice, right relations, forgiveness, compassion, mercy, reconciliation and love."

On the day the presbytery met to consider the overture, a letter was received from Michael Caveney, recently appointed convener of the Life and Mission Agency, offering to meet with the presbytery. However, Bill Middleton, presbytery clerk and a member of the presbytery committee appointed to support duCharme through a mediation process, said he felt the time for talking was long past.

If the General Assembly agrees with the presbytery's overture, a commission will be appointed by the Assembly in June 1999 to report one year later.

When contacted, neither Life and Mission general secretary Ian Morrison nor Michael Caveney wished to comment.

A time to plan, a time to celebrate

If we are to bring a 'value added' dimension to the secular marking of the millennium and help it to become a time of transformation, we must start planning now." That advice comes from the Hon. Rev. Walter McLean, convener of the Celebrate Steering Committee, who stressed that time is of the essence at presentations he made to all the synods last fall. He was there to encourage synods to hold special celebrations at their annual meetings in 1999 and 2000.

Last August, the Celebrate Committee sent letters to all presbytery and session clerks suggesting two co-leaders (one under 30 and one over 30) be appointed to co-ordinate planning for the Millennium/125th/Jubilee celebrations. A number of congregations and presbyteries have now named co-leaders and are considering events such as international twinning, exposure tours, reaffirmation services, prayer breakfasts, quilt-making, recording or updating histories, seniors and chil-

dren's gatherings, and housing projects.

The Federal Government Millennium Bureau has committed funding to support community projects during the millennium celebrations (1999-2000) for which congregation and presbytery projects are eligible. For more information

and an application, contact the Federal Millennium Bureau at 1-888-774-9999.

(Do you have any suggestions, questions or comments? Contact: Celebrate Office at 50 Wynford Drive, North York, ON M3C 1J7. Tel: 1-800-619-7301, ext. 324. Fax: (416) 441-2825. E-mail: celebrat@presbyterian.ca)

Hail to the Hall!

Evangel Hall, a Presbyterian inner-city mission in Toronto, was a finalist in the William Donner Memorial Awards for Effectiveness in the Delivery of Social Services.

The Donner Awards were created by the Donner Foundation of Vancouver to recognize the efforts of outstanding community service groups. Agencies were evaluated on criteria such as number of volunteer hours, low fund-raising costs, breadth of support, volume of client interventions, and methods used to ensure services are

delivered in a timely and compassionate way. Almost 400 agencies from across Canada applied for the award, which carries a grand prize of \$25,000 and five second-prizes of \$5,000, each.

While Evangel Hall did not win a prize, executive director David Smith was elated to have made it to the list of 22 finalists. "This is a great moment for the Hall," said Smith, "and for the entire Presbyterian Church. It's a sign that we are strong, and getting stronger, in the service of the poor — as a ministry and as a denomination."

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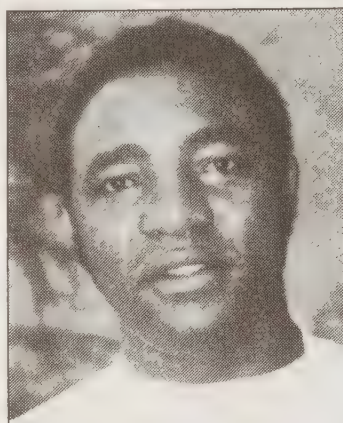
Kenyan Presbyterian minister tackles AIDS

The problem of HIV/AIDS in Kenya and most of sub-Saharan Africa is large. Ten per cent of the Kenyan population is infected with HIV, and all those infected will eventually die with AIDS. About nine out of every 10 HIV infections occur through heterosexual sex. Infection rates among youth and young adults are especially high — double that of the general population.

The Kenyan government is doing little to combat the problem. Churches, with a significant level of influence and outreach, have the potential to play an important role in HIV/AIDS prevention but, to date, have also done little. For many decision-makers in the church, the HIV/AIDS issue is not a priority. They refuse to acknowledge the level of sexual activity prior to and outside of marriage, preferring to be silent

about a disease which is mainly transmitted through sexual intercourse.

An exception to the rule is Rev.



Rev. Joseph Kinyua Mothaly

Joseph Kinyua Mothaly, a parish minister of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa in Kenya's north central Samburu district. A member of the Samburu tribe, he worked as a project manager with World Vision before entering the ministry in the late 1980s. As co-ordinator of the Samburu Pastors Association (an ecumenical

group with members from the Presbyterian, Anglican and Pentecostal churches), he has developed working relationships with the Roman Catholic mission, local government health officials and various non-governmental development organizations.

Mothaly has encountered several difficulties in his attempt to promote

HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention. Traditionally, issues of sexuality are not openly discussed among Kenyans. There is also a stigma attached to people with AIDS that makes victims reluctant to reveal their infection. Required behavioural changes in the population do not come quickly. Meanwhile, the number infected with HIV in Kenya is increasing by a full percentage point each year. Add to all that, the geographical size of Samburu District (1,500 square kilometres), along with poor roads, remote villages and no transportation, and his mission seems almost impossible.

Four basic approaches are taken. First, HIV/AIDS awareness has become a regular part of church services and activities. The topic is mentioned from the pulpit and is included on the agendas of youth and women's meetings as well as during crusades and community evangelizing. Second, programs have been started within primary and secondary schools. Third, HIV/AIDS folk drama is performed and short training sessions are

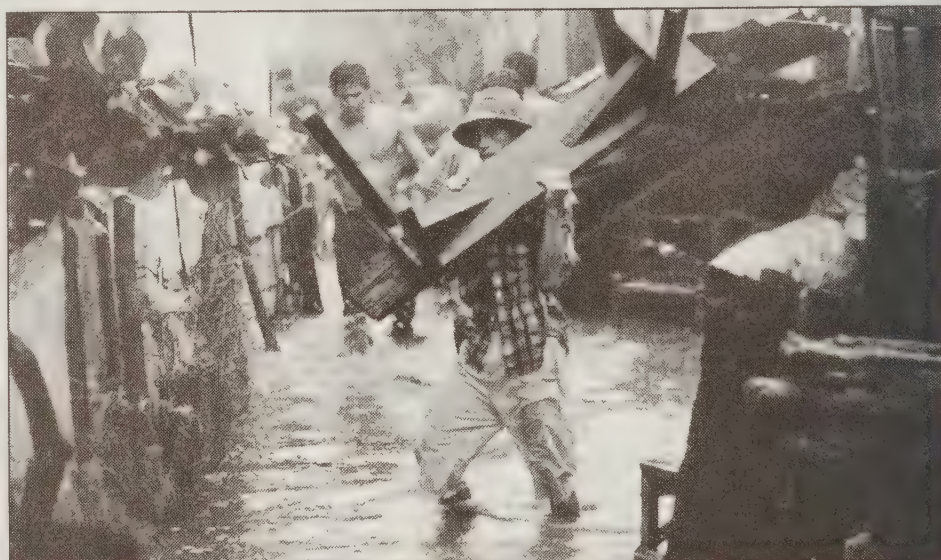
Relief work faces long road in wake of Hurricane Mitch

Hurricane Mitch, which swept through Central America and the Caribbean in November, is now considered to have been the strongest and most damaging storm ever to hit the area. Torrential rains and 180-kilometre winds caused catastrophic flooding and landslides, often washing away entire neighbourhoods. More than 10,000 people were killed and more than one million displaced.

The most vulnerable to the disaster were the poorest of the poor — the very people with whom Presbyterian World Service and Development's partners have worked over the years. All PWS&D's partners have reported similar challenges: contaminated water, no access to remote communities, food shortages, loss of homes and increased incidence of disease.

PWS&D was able to respond quickly, sending initial payments (as of November 30) totalling \$65,000 to its partner agen-

cies to help meet immediate needs. International Ministries staff in the region are all safe and working on relief efforts.



Nicaraguans struggle to reclaim their lives in the wake of Hurricane Mitch. (Photo: *Neuvo Diario*, Managua, Nicaragua)

carried out on a periodic basis for rural communities. Fourth, condoms are distributed in bars for use by customers and commercial sex workers (prostitutes).

Mothaly believes the community is beginning to understand the facts and issues of HIV/AIDS and that progress is being made, however slowly. He would like to see the present programs expanded to include more counselling for commercial sex workers and practical ways

to help people with AIDS. He also hopes the activities being carried out in the Samburu District will be duplicated elsewhere. He notes the Presbyterian Church of East Africa has begun a training course (funded by The Presbyterian Church in Canada and Inter-Church Action) in which several Samburu parish members have participated.

"Whatever ways are chosen," Mothaly says, "those ways must be effective,

ongoing and sustainable." In the meantime, he has demonstrated that the HIV/AIDS issue can be addressed locally, despite significant financial restraints. His actions also demonstrate such work can and should be an integral part of the church's outreach. (*From a report by Rick Allen, a member of the PCC overseas staff serving as a medical doctor with the Presbyterian Church of East Africa*)

Now That the Dust Has Settled: In the Wake of the Nairobi Bombing

Ian Clark

In mid-morning on August 7, 1998, the American embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, were bombed. Three weeks after the blast, I visited Nairobi on a short-term assignment with the Presbyterian Church of East Africa. Nairobi experienced the highest number of deaths and injuries, as well as property damage. This bomb blast killed 250 people and left 5,000 injured, some now totally blind. It could have been much worse for the Americans who lost 11 in the attack.

The vehicle carrying the bomb did not fully enter the underground parking garage, so the damage to the American embassy was less; the damage to other (Kenyan) buildings was greater. One corner of the embassy collapsed half a storey into its own basement. The neighbouring seven-storey building was completely demolished; and the next building, a 19-storey building, lost every window and door.

Close to the end of a worship service at which I preached, a woman strode to the chancel. She addressed the congregation, telling them her husband and a son had died in the blast. Although not a member of the congregation, she came to worship and to thank God for the help she had been given by the members of the church who were her neighbours. As she told of their care and concern, she broke down and wept. Before leaving the church, she added her offering to the offering on the table.

A Kenyan Asian friend told me the day of the bomb was his proudest moment as a Kenyan. In the immediate aftermath of the destruction, the whole community pulled together to help each other without consideration for race, creed or social status. The unity of his too often divided nation was never more clearly demonstrated.

A young doctor recounted the response in the Kenyatta national hospital. When everyone's pager beeped simultaneously, all off-duty nursing and medical staff rushed to assist their colleagues. For 36 hours, no paperwork or records were kept — injured people requiring urgent care were treated. Blankets, sheets and food poured in. Care and comfort became the priority. Only later did the business of records and identification begin.

Our partner church, the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, has a five-point plan to continue its care. In partnership with Anglican and Baptist neighbours, they have established a trauma centre to offer counselling and to direct those in need to the appropriate service. Those who cannot meet their medical expenses receive financial assistance. Of the 5,000 injured, 550 required additional hospitalization, surgery or other medical procedures. The 150 children who became orphans through this act of terrorism will require educational assistance for school fees and uniforms.

Short-term support and assistance in the form of food, clothing and shelter is a fourth aspect of the church's re-

sponse. The final point addresses long-term needs such as retraining, rehabilitation and development. This includes a range of programs including courses and support for the newly blind and the partially sighted to the replacement of tools and places of work.

The events surrounding August 7, 1998, will eventually be examined in the law courts of the United States as suspects are brought to trial. The profound effects on the life of Kenya are unlikely to figure there. The blast came when political forces in Kenya seemed to be fanning the embers of distrust between Christian and Muslim communities. Tensions rose in the Mombasa region following the demolition of stalls in Nairobi's city market as Muslims claimed the space.

The national unity that the bomb created was a blast in that political process. Perhaps, the political concessions offered by President Moi in the constitutional debate on August 24 were in reaction to the new-found unity. A few days later, six local NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations) — five Muslim groups — were deregistered. The unity created in the wake of the bomb gave way after the dust had settled, and a reinstatement of division was attempted. Unrest is a political tool for those who would divide and rule.

Ian Clark, former missionary of The Presbyterian Church in Canada in partnership with the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, is minister of Westminster Church in Scarborough, Ont.

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Replies would be appreciated by

February 15, 1999.

Western Ukraine hit by floods

While most of the world was watching the tragic results of Hurricane Mitch in the Caribbean and Central America, a catastrophe on a smaller scale was wreaking havoc in the Transcarpathian Province of western Ukraine. Exceptionally heavy rains during September and October have resulted in severe flooding, affecting the lives of some 300,000 people. As of November 16, more than 24,000 people had been

displaced, 118 settlements were under water and 487 bridges were destroyed or severely damaged.

At the request of the Protestant Churches in Hungary, Hungarian Inter-Church Aid (HIA) has been monitoring the disaster and assessing emergency needs. Presbyterian World Service and Development has sent \$5,000 to Action by Churches Together in support of HIA's relief work.

News Scan

Press Club honours Presbyterian

Stevie Cameron, editor-in-chief of *Elm Street* magazine, a member of St. Andrew's Church, Toronto, and a member of the *Presbyterian Record* Committee, has been chosen for the prestigious Quill Award by the Press Club of Windsor, Ontario. The award recognizes "significant contributions to the field of Canadian communications." Previous winners include Alan Fotheringham and Peter Gzowski. Cameron is also an author. Her latest book, *Blue Trust*, has recently been published.

Presbyterian, he says he prayed every day in orbit. Glenn is not unique among astronauts. The crew of *Apollo 8* punctuated the first flight around the moon with a reading from Genesis. Apollo astronaut Jim Irwin became an evangelist before his death in 1991. Astronaut Tammy Jernigan talked about her Christian faith in a live broadcast from a shuttle three years ago. And Shannon Lucid, the daughter of missionaries, took a minister's sermons up to the Russian space station *Mir*. (Source: *Toronto Star*)

Evening in Nazareth

An ambitious project has been launched to reconstruct an ancient part of Nazareth as a living village — looking and operating as it did when Jesus lived there. On November 21, a groundbreaking ceremony was held on the eight-hectare site. Organizers have begun a major fund-raising drive for the estimated \$60 million (US) needed to complete the work. The project would feature villagers dressed in period clothing engaged in activities such as weaving and farming. The products of their labour, including wine and olive oil, would be offered for sale. Farm animals would also be used to create the ambience. "It was a little dirty, a little smelly and a little rough," said archeologist Ross Joseph Voss, a Roman Catholic working on the site. (ENI)

The big quarterback upstairs

Football legend Mike Ditka has some advice for his quarterback Kerry Collins, whose career has been troubled by personal problems. "I think he's got to have a meaningful relationship with our Lord," Ditka said. "Until you come full circle spiritually, it's pretty hard to deal with the rest of the stuff in the world. He's got to believe in something. Is it tomorrow? The sun? The leaves and the trees? Taking walks? If you believe in all that stuff, you should believe in the Creator of all that stuff." (Source: *Christian Courier*)

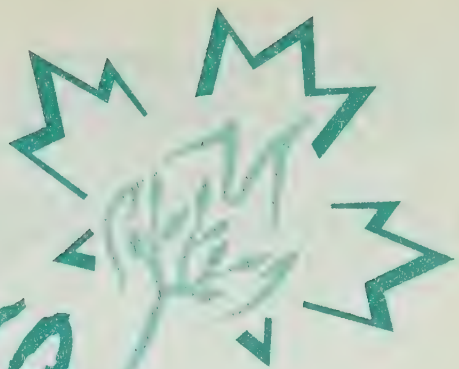
Nearer, my God, to thee

From high above Earth, John Glenn says he saw the face of God. A devout

The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Millennium / 125th / Jubilee

Celebrate!



In the African country of Mozambique, one in four children dies before the age of five — a victim of disease and malnutrition. Why? War, drought and falling commodity prices are the major causes. The nation's debt requirement payments to rich nations make it impossible for the government to provide its citizens with essential services such as health care.

In response to similar situations in 50 countries, a global coalition of church and humanitarian groups has launched Jubilee 2000, a millennium effort to persuade rich nations to forgive these debts which are literally killing the people of many poor nations. This campaign hopes to collect 24 million signatures in favour of cancelling the debts. Maybe you have already signed a petition or walked in a march promoting this effort.

For Christians, the impetus for such an effort comes from the Old Testament whereby, every seventh year, the land was left fallow so that it might regenerate itself. The year after seven, seven-year periods (the 50th year) was declared the Year of Jubilee. In that year, slaves were to be liberated, debts cancelled and land returned to its original owners. So everyone got a fresh start on a level playing field. For the Church, jubilee reminds us that God is the ultimate owner who provides for a time of repentance and preparation for the coming Kingdom.

We invite you to share events involving the jubilee initiative in this column. It will run in the *Record* for the next two years.

You or your congregation or presbytery may also be planning other millennium events in the next two years. We hope you will also share these with us so that others may be encouraged and inspired by your efforts. Keep in mind that governments at all levels are becoming increasingly involved in millennium celebrations. It may be that you can receive support for your programs from some of them. For example, the churches in the City of Mississauga, Ontario, have joined with the municipality in sponsoring a series of prayer breakfasts during the millennium.

At this point, the federal government seems the best organized. The Canadian Millennium Partnership Program provides financial assistance and/or endorsement for initiatives "that will encourage Canadians to explore our heritage, celebrate our

achievements, and build our future." There is a web site (www.millennium.gc.ca) on which you can post your project or event. You may also contact them at: Canada Millennium Partnership Program, Millennium Bureau of Canada, Box 2000, Station D, Ottawa, K1P 1E5 (telephone 1-888-774-9999).

Coinciding with the millennium is the 125th anniversary of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. In June 1999, the 125th General Assembly will meet in Kitchener, Ontario. In June 2000, the 126th General Assembly will mark the 125th anniversary of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. You may be doing something in your congregation to mark this anniversary. We would also like to hear about those events so we can include them in this column.

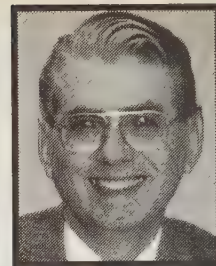
Last year, the General Assembly appointed a national Celebrate Steering Committee to coordinate, support and publicize activities surrounding the jubilee, millennium and 125th anniversary. Rev. Walter McLean is the convener. Andrew Kerr works out of the Celebrate office at church offices and will be happy to assist you with ideas and information. You may contact the Celebrate office at: 50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, Ontario M3C 1J7 (Tel. (416) 441-1111 or 1-800-619-7301 ext. 324, Fax (416) 441-2825). And visit the Celebrate web site (www.presbycan.ca/pccmill).

Susan Kerr, a member of the Celebrate Committee, has written a prayer for the millennium. It catches the spirit of the celebration. In part, it says:

Holy God, we would be your people
in this coming millennium.

We ask you to live in and through us
in hope which does not disappoint,
in love which seeks nothing in return.

We humbly ask that you be with us,
along with the whole communion of saints,
as we love you wholly,
imitate Jesus fearlessly,
seek justice constantly,
show compassion unendingly,
and so build the reign of your kingdom here on earth. **R**



Going Through the Motions

At our annual congregational meeting, the minister moved the appointment of the chairperson for the meeting. He also moved the acceptance of the board of management's nominating committee report, a committee of which he was a member. Is it proper procedure for the minister to make motions and be a voting member on a committee in the business session of a congregation? And should the minister leave the congregational meeting while the meeting discusses issues pertaining to him or her (i.e., stipend)?

Are you talking about a Presbyterian minister and a Presbyterian congregation?

Within our form of church government, the minister is not a member of the congregation but is accountable to, and under the oversight and pastoral care of, the presbytery, the church court of which

he or she is a member. Since it is illegal for someone to vote or to make a motion in a body of which the person is not a member, it follows that a minister cannot vote or move any motions in a meeting of the congregation. Strictly speaking, the decisions your congregational meeting made upon the motion of the minister have no legal weight. (The matters to which you refer in your letter were not weighty, so I hope grace will prevail!)

The minister may moderate a congregational meeting, as regulated by the Book of Forms (section 154). But moderators do not make motions and moderators do not vote, except to break a tie.

The congregational meeting has no business discussing any issues pertaining to the minister except the consideration of the stipend or the state of the manse, etc. If there are concerns about the minister's life and work, these should be addressed through the session to the presbytery. It is the presbytery to which the minister is finally accountable before the Lord.

When it comes to discussion of the

stipend, it should not be necessary for the minister to leave the meeting. Ideally, the amount of the stipend should be arrived at in consultation with the minister and should not become a bone of contention on the floor of the congregation. This is a delicate area because it could be that members of the congregation may want to "get at" the minister by way of the stipend. They may use it as a means to voice displeasure with his or her ministry and, in effect, raise issues that should properly come before the presbytery. There is nothing to prevent people from voicing their displeasure, but members of the congregation should be aware that there is a process of petition and complaint that they must follow to have the presbytery deal with their concerns. These are serious matters. Steps along that road should not be taken lightly.

I speak for many ministers who find the congregational discussion of their stipend somewhat demeaning. In what other societies is the salary so publicly known and so widely discussed?

If a representative elder to presbytery has been named to a presbytery committee, and if the work of that committee is not completed in the year of appointment, when a new representative elder is appointed the following year, does the first-named elder continue on the committee?

I think it depends on the nature of the committee's work. If it is essential that the membership of the committee consists of people on the constituent roll (that is, full members of the court who have voting privileges), then the new representative elder, or someone else

who has voting privileges, would take the place of the original appointee. The original appointee might be asked to continue in a consultative capacity if "corporate memory" is important.

But much presbytery committee work can be done with a mix of people recruited from both the voting and non-voting membership of the presbytery. Some members on the Appendix to the roll (such as retired ministers or those without a charge, having a voice but no vote in presbytery) give devoted service to the work of the court. Many presbyteries would be even more pressed without such loyal support from these members.

Some presbyteries actively recruit a percentage of committee membership

from congregations, people who have neither voice nor vote in presbytery. This might be a legally risky venture because such people are not directly accountable to the presbytery and, by having the vote in a committee of the court, they have an indirect vote in that court. It seems to me, however, if presbytery duly appoints them to serve in more than a consultative capacity, the court thereby indicates its willingness to hear their voice through their vote. It may not be strictly kosher, but it seems to work. **R**

Please send questions to Rev. Tony Plomp, 4020 Lancelot Dr., Richmond, B.C. V7C 4S3. Include your name and address for information.

An Idea That's Grown Like Hotcakes

Nancy Rouble

A high point in the life of our small country church arrives on the Sunday nearest Valentine's Day: our annual Valentine Pancake Brunch. About eight years ago, the church school took on the daunting task of hosting a delicious meal for the whole congregation following worship. Food was donated or paid for from church school funds so that the total amount of a freewill offering might go to a charity chosen by the children.

Over the years, we have supported the local soup kitchen, the Alzheimer

During the opening music and children's story in the worship service, the delicious smell of cooking sausages from a local butcher floats through the sanctuary. Pancakes made from a tried-and-true recipe, donated muffins and maple syrup from local producers complete the menu. During the 30 minutes of church school, everyone has a job: the older children cook, the youngest fill trays of muffins, all help with setting and decorating the tables.

After the last strains of "Amen," several children appear at the church door

The annual Valentine Pancake Brunch at Victoria Church in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, feeds the soul as well as the stomach

with a heaping plate of food and a Valentine's wish for our minister, David Jack, who must rush off to another service. After grace, the children begin to serve the happy feast.

I thank God daily for the gift of children in our church, for their eagerness to serve and give. And for a congregation and minister who, instead of raising eyebrows at the children's imperfections, nurture their enthusiasm through prayer and deed. The kingdom surely belongs to such as these. **R**

Nancy Rouble is a church school teacher at Victoria Church, Sault Ste. Marie, Ont.



Children at Victoria Church, Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., prove they are more than short-order cooks.

Society, a family in need, a foster child and victims of the ice storm. For the past few years, half of the receipts have gone to Presbyterians Sharing.... One year, the children found great satisfaction surprising a special friend with a generous donation to help pay his medical expenses.

Children from two to 12 contribute to this production. Despite complicating factors, such as the water in the kitchen being shut off for the winter, we insist on using the church's good china to help make the event special.



Photos: Marie Tholberg

PEOPLE & PLACES

FIVE MEMBERS OF St. Columba Church, Parksville, B.C., were honoured at the church's anniversary dinner on September 11. All five had either celebrated their 90th birthday since the congregation's previous anniversary or will celebrate it before the next one. Known affectionately as "The Ninety Gang," they are (L to R): Marge Currier, Betty Furness, Lorne Mcleod, Jean Peace and Helen Colebrook.



"THE LOST SON" was one of three parables (along with "The Lost Coin" and "The Lost Sheep") re-enacted by the congregation of Kirk on the Hill, Fonthill, Ont., at its outdoor service. Pictured (L to R) are: Al Kidnew, Rev. Elizabeth Kidnew, Jeanette Mullin, Al Mullin, Tim Emmons, Marian Cameron and Wendy Young.



THE PASTORAL CARE COMMITTEE presented new Bibles, purchased with money from the memorial fund, to the congregation of St. Andrew's Church, Welland, Ont.. Pictured are Edythe Phillips, of the pastoral care committee, and Rev. Ron Sharpe.



THIS PAST SUMMER, the Kirk of St. James in Charlottetown — "The cradle of Confederation" — celebrated the 125th anniversary of Prince Edward Island joining Canada. Two of the Fathers of Confederation, J. C. Pope and Col. Grey, were members of the kirk. Pictured with a modern-day Col. Grey and his wife is Fran Lawson, a member of the congregation and great-granddaughter of the original Greys.



THE LADIES GUILD of First Church, Stellarton, N.S., dedicated new Communion linen in memory of past members and their outstanding contributions to the church. Pictured are Ladies Guild president Loudelle Matheson and Rev. Charles McPherson.

Please note: Photos submitted for People & Places must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope if they are to be returned. Also, please try to ensure all pictures are clear and do not include a multitude of people. Colour or black-and-white photos are acceptable, but negatives and slides cannot be used. Thank you.

PEOPLE & PLACES

THE CONGREGATION OF Trinity Church (York Mills), Toronto, celebrated its 45th anniversary last year. Pictured after the anniversary service are (L to R): Rev. Charlotte Brown; Rev. Thomas Kay, minister of Trinity; guest speaker Rev. Bill Klempa, Moderator of the 124th General Assembly; Cathy Kay; Lois Klempa.



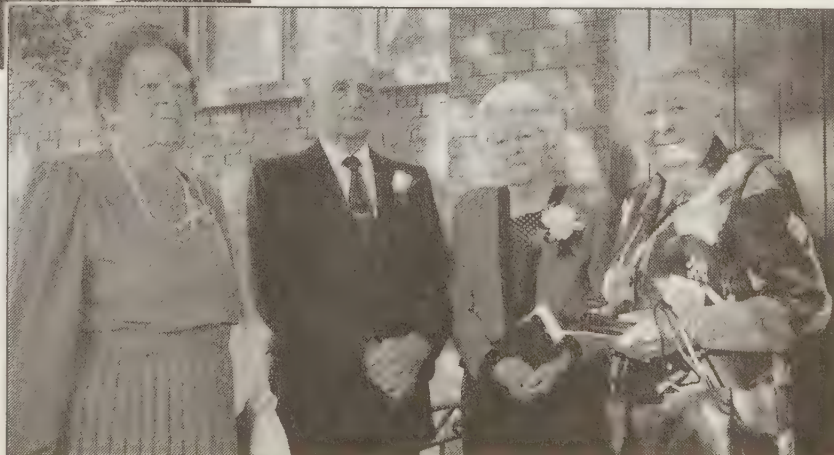
THREE RETIRING ELDERS of Riverside Church, Windsor, Ont., were recently honoured by the congregation with the presentation of certificates. Pictured (L to R) are: Eric Munt, Bob Parker, Rev. Rosemary Doran, Dick Carey (clerk of session) and Marjory Butcher receiving the certificate on behalf of her husband, Nelson.

THE CHOIRS OF North Bramalea Church, Brampton, Ont., are pictured in gowns given to them by Calvin Church, North Bay, Ont. Betty Farris, organist at Calvin Church and sister of Louise Yassa, an organist at North Bramalea Church, helped to arrange the gift.



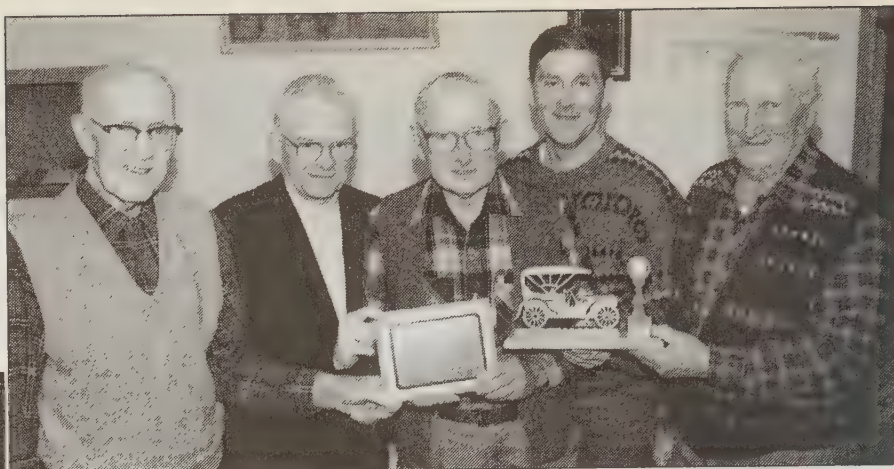
MARIAN AND DUNCAN GILCHRIST, longtime members of Knox Church, Goderich, Ont., celebrated their 66th wedding anniversary last year. They are pictured with Marian's sisters, Barbara McGregor (left) and Isabel McGill (right), both also longtime members of Knox Church.

THE SENIOR CHURCH SCHOOL CLASS of Sand Hill Church, Pittsburgh Township, Ont., presented the congregation with a 52-page historical book at the church's 139th anniversary service last year. The book is the culmination of a three-year project. Pictured (L to R) are: Jessica Mundell, Mike Mundell (teacher), Rev. Mark Ward, Tracey Curtis, Keri Greenlees, Robin Nuttall, Steve Best, Trevor Nuttall (hidden), Matt Mundell and Jessica Greenlees.



PEOPLE & PLACES

THE CONGREGATION OF French River Church, Pictou County, N.S., presented Alex Woolley with a plaque and a carved wooden clock in appreciation for 34 years of faithful service as church caretaker. Pictured (L to R) are: Arthur McCulloch, senior elder; Rev. John Cameron; Alex Woolley; Kevin Joe Simpson, treasurer of the building fund; Gordon Browning, elder.



ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH, Olds, Alta., held a Vacation Bible School for 24 children, employing a re-enactment of the story of Jonah to introduce the topic of mission. The offering collected was used to purchase school supplies for children in Latin America. Pictured with Jonah's boat are (L to R): Jean Kirker, church musician; Rev. Ena Van Zoeren; Priscilla Towers, visiting elder.



REV. GEORGE VAIS is pictured with Norma Crawford (left) and Frances Halpenny, who presented him with a specially designed card on behalf of Northlea United Church, Toronto, prior to his retirement from Leaside Church, Toronto. Members of Northlea, a neighbouring church to Leaside, signed the card. The congregation also made a contribution to ALS research in honour of George.



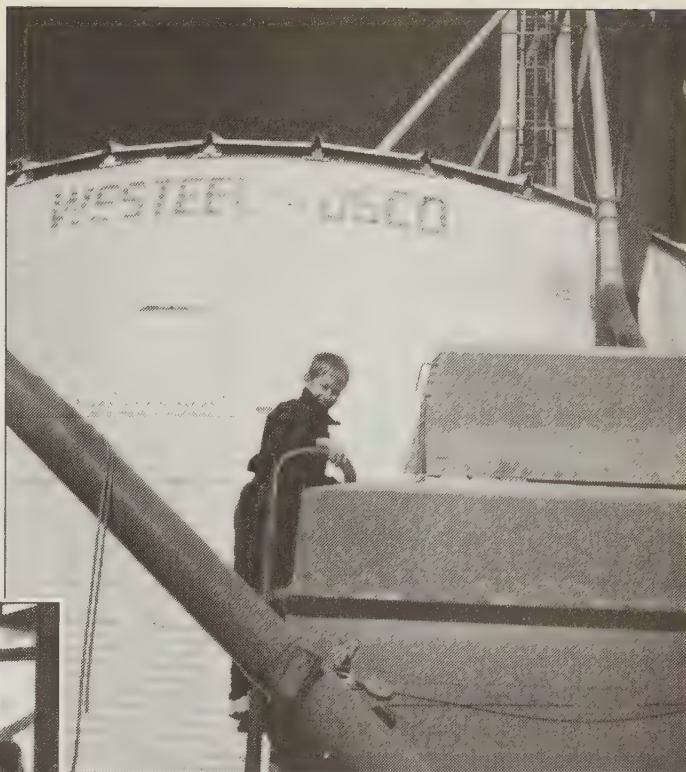
NEW STAINED GLASS WINDOWS on the theme "The Holy Spirit" were dedicated at St. Andrew's Church, Ancaster, Ont. The windows were given in memory of Mary Henry, Hugh Morwick and his wife Jane Flett, and their descendants by members of the Henry and Morwick families. Pictured (L to R) are: Rev. Ron Archer, Bill Kirkpatrick, Jean Smith, Jean Morwick, Jim Henry, Helen Morwick and Mary Hudson.

THE CONGREGATION OF St. Andrew's Church, Thunder Bay, Ont., recently honoured Harry Hollinsworth on his 50th year as an elder of the church. Pictured presenting him with a certificate of recognition at the congregation's 109th anniversary service is Peggy Graham, clerk of session.

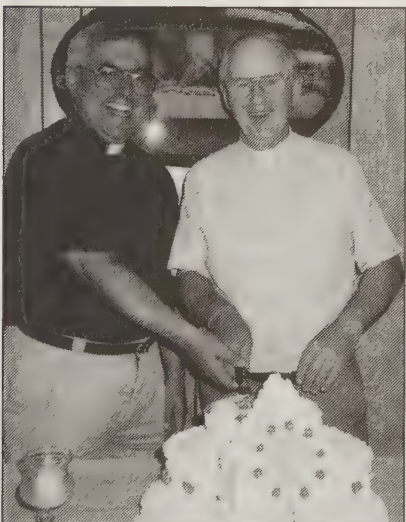


PEOPLE & PLACES

MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH SCHOOL and several adults from Westmount Church, London, Ont., saw the results of their fund-raising initiative for the Canadian Foodgrains Bank when they visited farms in the Rodney/Kintyre/New Glasgow area. The young people raised money through their "Desserts Made With Love" project, and members of the congregation made donations in return for the sweets provided with coffee after Sunday services. Pictured, Jake McNiven of London explores the mystery of grain handling.



MEMBERS OF THE Women's Committee of Glen Mhor Camp had a firsthand look at what their fund-raising has accomplished when they visited the camp last summer. After having lunch with the campers, the women had an opportunity to watch the afternoon activities. For most of the past 65 years, the women's committee, composed of representatives from several Toronto area congregations, has sponsored an annual event to raise funds for Glen Mhor. Last year, a luncheon and silent auction were held.



AN "EVENING OF MUSIC" was presented by Westmount Church, Edmonton, to celebrate the purchase of a new organ. Organists from the past 30 years presented an eclectic program designed to showcase the organ and the many friends who have joined in music-making at Westmount. The organ was also used to accompany three members of the congregation: Leanne Dammann, violin; Ray Herbert, clarinet; Cory Stiel, vocals. The evening ended with refreshments provided by the choir. Pictured (L to R) are organists: Mary Degier, Carolyn McCrostie, Allison Glen, Nelda Langdon and Keltie Stearman. (Missing: Lillian Stillman)



▲ BESS MACINTOSH, senior member of Knox Church, Selkirk, Man., was honoured by the congregation at a luncheon marking her 95th birthday last September. Bess is a member of the session, choir and church guild, and is involved in many church activities.

▲ THE 125TH ANNIVERSARY of St. Andrew's Church, North River, Cape Breton, N.S., was celebrated by the congregation last year. Following the service, a reception was held, featuring a pictorial history of past and present members and events. Pictured, Rev. Glenn MacDonald of Thornburn (left) and Rev. Murdock MacRae of North Sydney prepare to cut the anniversary cake.



Clergy Women: An Uphill Calling

by Barbara Brown Zikmund, Adair T. Lummis and Patricia Mei Yin Chang (Westminster John Knox Press, 1998, \$33.95). Reviewed by Patricia Dutcher-Walls.

The ordination of women: a significant change in ministry. But how is it working? This book presents the results of an important study which surveyed 4,600 ordained women and men from 15 major denominations in the United States. It provides a fascinating picture of ministry and women in ministry today.

Many clergy women find balancing ministry, home and family, and personal time an ongoing and complex juggling act. The study shows women clergy are effective leaders and are generally viewed positively by their parishioners and other clergy. Overall, they are dedicated to serving God and the church. This spiritual dimension is important to them.

Some changes in recent decades have affected both men and women. For example, the average age at which people seek ordination has risen, generally providing more mature and experienced "first-call" ministers. Also, the leadership style of both men and women clergy has moved toward a more inclusive, democratic approach over the years.

However, there are some significant differences in the job experience in ministry for ordained men and women. Women clergy have a more difficult time finding jobs, often ending up in associate/staff/lower status positions; men with equal experience get senior/managerial/higher status positions. Women clergy overall earn nine per cent less than men. These differences still hold true when all other factors are adjusted — age, education, family situation/children and experience. Even in denominations hav-

ing deployment or call procedures that attempt to be gender-neutral, inequities continue to affect women.

On the positive side, clergy women are being creative about their calling to ministry and have pursued, both from necessity and desire, mixed, flexible and diverse career paths. Women and some men are finding that ministry in hospitals, education, missions, community service and pastoral counselling is better suited to their gifts and is still understood as ordained ministry.

While the Canadian situation differs in some ways from the American churches surveyed, many of the insights and results are applicable. Reading this book can help women ministers understand their own experiences. More important, this study provides a thought-provoking look at ministry today for everyone who is concerned with the present and future of the church.

Patricia Dutcher-Walls is assistant professor of Hebrew Scripture and Old Testament at Knox College, Toronto.

Gems From the Bible by Neil J. McLean (published privately, 1997, \$9). Available from Rev. Neil J. McLean, 49 Atlantic St., Sydney, N.S. B1P 3P9. Reviewed by J. Gillis Smith.

Neil McLean is a retired minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada whose pastoral ministry began in 1951. He served several congregations in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. This is his second book. (The first, *Timely Bible Doctrines*, is out of print.)

In *Gems From the Bible*, McLean presents a broad and vivid survey of biblical teaching and devotion in poetry and prose. He takes the reader on a thematic journey along the highroads of the Old

and New Testaments. He moves from a poetic treatment of Creation and Abraham's family to prose surveys of the subjects of Joseph, Tabernacle worship, the book of Daniel, the parables, the Good Samaritan and the book of Revelation.

The vividness of *Gems From the Bible* is a result of McLean's clear and economical writing style, together with his use of practical and appropriate analogy. He addresses diverse sections of the Bible in an effort to direct readers toward the full panorama of God's word with its gracious and redemptive themes — themes that find their fulfilment in Jesus Christ. To this end, he offers a detailed and lively treatment of the "signposts" to Jesus within the Old Testament.

McLean's intriguing excursions through the books of Daniel and Revelation are couched in clear rather than mystifying terms. He does not attempt to oversimplify, however, at the expense of the profound themes involved. Rather, he acknowledges the issues of interpretation that peek out so often in any discussion of the End Times. He is not wildly speculative but remains conservative and Christocentric throughout.

The Christ-centred focus of *Gems From the Bible* is evident by the time the reader reaches the parables of the Galilean seaside and the Good Samaritan. "The great message of Christianity is salvation by faith," McLean affirms. He discusses the ethical, practical and church-related themes of Scripture within the context of the saving economy of the Father, through the Son, by the Holy Spirit. This reverent grounding in the great themes of Scripture makes his book a useful and engaging work for study and devotional reading by young and old alike.

J. Gillis Smith is the minister of St. Peter's in Stanley and St. Paul's in Williamsburg, N.B.

Canada's Great Grain Robbery
by Don Baron (*Don Baron Communications*, 1998, \$14.95). Available from Don Baron, 14 Wood Cres., Regina, Sask. S4S 6J7. Reviewed by Ivor Williams.

There is a bit of religious history and a lot about the development of the Prairie grain industry, particularly its outmoded marketing and related transportation system, in Don Baron's self-published, 200-page volume (sales of which are already approaching 4,000). The book is not, as the author points out, an attack on the church. But Baron's research tells the story of the Social Gospel and its impact on Canada and the West. (Baron is an elder at First Church in Regina and a longtime agricultural activist.)

Earlier research, largely ignored, documents what Baron calls a stunning phenomenon: the leading role played by some Protestant pastors in the public debate that shaped the grain industry and the country. Some pastors from the

United States crossed into developing Western Canada, preaching and writing about poverty and suffering. They blamed the world's ills on the capitalist system and offered a simple remedy: abolish capitalism and the open market.

The distinctive task of the age was the abolition of capitalism, preached Salem Bland, an early Methodist from Winnipeg. Researcher Paul Earl concluded that while farm people adopted ideas from British and American co-operativism, they drew inspiration from Protestant religious thought and, specifically, from that Social Gospel.

The book traces the development and marketing of the great Saskatchewan grain harvest through the giant co-operative pools and the National Wheat Board. Baron's views and conclusion, which echo those of Mac Runciman, longtime leader of the United Grain Growers Limited, are that the grain handling system fell far behind the requirements because of political action and inaction. He hopes Canadians learn from the mistakes inherent in the

political meddling of the past and "free up prairie growers to build strongly on their great resource base and to return to world leadership for the benefit of themselves, their children and the world's people."

The conflict with the wheat board, which appears as the bad guy in this volume, goes on. Prairie farmers are still before the courts, charged with selling grain to waiting North Dakota buyers rather than to the board. But the growers' demand for freedom in marketing can no longer be denied, Baron concludes.

Canada's Great Grain Robbery was nominated in the non-fiction category for a 1998 Saskatchewan Book Award.

Ivor Williams is a retired daily journalist, a member of Westmount Church in London, Ont., and a contributing editor of this magazine.

Most books reviewed may be purchased through The Book Room, 50 Wynford Dr., North York, Ont. M3C 1J7. Do not send payment with order. An invoice will follow. Please include name and location of congregation. Toll-free order line: 1-800-619-7301, ext. 301.

ArithmeCode by Dave Mitchell

Find the value of each symbol by doing the arithmetic. Replace each symbol with the letter which corresponds to its value to find the *ArithmeCode* word below. Category: **STORY OF JOB**

- i $(196 \div 14) \div (1/3 \text{ of } 42) = \bullet$
- ii $75\% \text{ of } (\bullet + 23) = \square$
- iii $45\% \text{ of } (\square + \bullet + \bullet) = \diamond$
- iv $(\diamond \times \square) \div (\square - 4.5) = \blacksquare$
- v $2/3 \text{ of } (\blacksquare + \square + \diamond - 9) = \blacklozenge$

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z		
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The *ArithmeCode* word is:

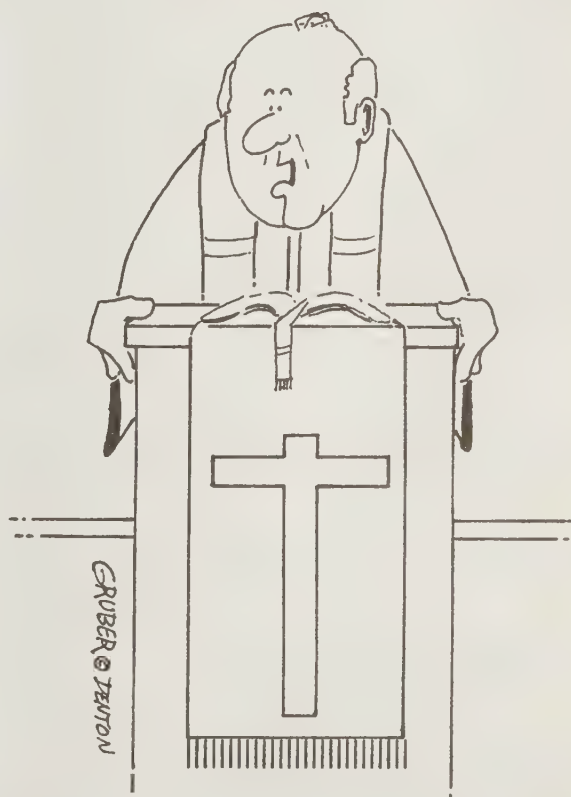


ArithmeCode answer from last issue: **PEACE**

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Booklets of 100 puzzles available at \$10 each. Standard version (as above), Junior, Integer versions. Send a cheque payable to ArithmeCode, 143 White Pine Cr., Waterloo, ON N2V 1B3. www.arithmecode.com e-mail: mitchell@kw.igs.net

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"Alcoholics Anonymous will meet Tuesday at 7 p.m., Gamblers Anonymous will meet Wednesday at 8 p.m., and Presbyterians Anonymous will meet here again next Sunday at 11 a.m."

DEATHS

DION, SHIRLEY GRACE, 63, member of St. Paul's, Victoria Harbour, Ont., died Nov. 17.

DOUGLAS, ANTHONY, 82, longtime adherent, St. Andrew's, St. Lambert, Que., Nov. 23; father of Terry Anthony-Folster, Saskatoon Native Circle Ministry.

DOUGLAS, MARION, 88, longtime member of Knox, Mitchell, Ont., May 21.

ENGLAND, JEAN STEWART, age 86, longtime faithful member and elder, an ardent church worker with children, president of the Jean Moodie Missionary Society for over 30 years, of St. David's Presbyterian Church, Hamilton, Ont., Nov. 9.

JAGGERNAUTH, SINANEN, 81, a devout Christian, longtime faithful member, served many years as elder and roll clerk of Melrose Park, Toronto, died Nov. 14.

MEIER, ALLIE, 67, first elder and charter member of Parkland First, Stony Plain, Alta; she had also been an elder and a member of the first choir at Callingwood Road, Edmonton, prior to joining Parkland First.

MURPHY, JEANET I. (FRASER), 89, longtime active member, life member of the Women's Missionary Society, Stamford Presbyterian Church, Niagara Falls, Ont., April 6.

VANDER WAL, WILMA, 85, member of Presbyterian Church since 1951 arrival in Canada, active in all phases of church work, her work with the choirs and the WMS especially dear to her heart; wife of Rev. J. Vander Wal.

ORDINATIONS

Hamilton, Rev. Thomas James, Presbytery of Brampton, Claude Church, Inglewood, Ont., June 14.

INDUCTIONS and RECOGNITIONS

Hartai, Rev. Helen W., St. Luke's, Oshawa, Ont., Nov. 8.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES and INTERIM MODERATORS

Synod of the Atlantic Provinces

Barney's River, N.S., Marshy Hope pastoral charge. Rev. John Cameron, RR 1,

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New Glasgow, N.S., Westminster. Rev. Glenn Cooper, Box 1078, Westville, N.S. B0K 2A0.

River John, N.S., St. George's; Toney River, St. David's. Rev. Kenneth MacLeod, Box 185, New Glasgow, N.S. B2H 5E2.

St. John's, Nfld., St. Andrew's. Rev. Ted Thompson, 98 Elizabeth Ave., St. John's, Nfld. A1A 4C4.

Summerside, P.E.I., Summerside Church. Rev. Christine Schulze, Box 32, Tyne Valley, P.E.I. C0B 2C0.

Synod of Quebec and Eastern Ontario

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Beaconsfield, Que., Briarwood. Rev. Glynis Williams, Action Réfugiés Montreal, 1410 Guy, Montreal, Que. H3H 2L7.

Beauharnois, Que., St. Edward's; Valleyfield, Valleyfield Church (part-time). Rev. Kate Jordan, 50 Prince, Huntingdon, Que. J0S 1H0.

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Montreal, Knox, Crescent, Kensington and

First. Rev. Richard Topping, 3415 Redpath St., Montreal, Que. H3G 2G2.

Montreal, Korean. Rev. John Kim, 298 Rudar Rd., Mississauga, Ont. L5A 1S3.

Montreal, Maisonneuve-St. Cuthbert's. Rev. Coralie Jackson-Bissonnette, 5545 Snowdon Ave., Montreal, Que. H3X 1Y8.

Ottawa, St. Giles. Rev. Wm. C. MacLellan, 1538 Meadowfield Place, Ottawa, Ont. K1C 5V9.

Smiths Falls, Ont., Westminster (effective April 30). Rev. Larry Paul, 24 North Street, Perth, Ont. K7H 2S5.

Verdun, Que., First. Rev. Jacqueline Frioud, 4909 Montclair, Montreal, Que. H4V 2K7.

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Cambridge, Knox's Galt. Rev. Kevin Livingston, 73 Queen St. E, Cambridge, Ont. N3C 2A9.

Campbellford, St. Andrew's; Burnbrae, St. Andrew's. Rev. Bill Bynum, PO Box 787, Campbellford, ON. K0L 1L0.

Claude, Claude Church. Rev. Gerald Rennie, 67 Churchill Rd. N, Acton, Ont. L7J 2H9.

Coldwater, St. Andrew's. Mrs. Kathleen Martin, Box 695, Coldwater, Ont. L0K 1E0.

Collingwood, First (two ministers). Rev. James Kitson, 539 Hugel Ave., Midland, Ont. L4R 1W1.

Englehart, St. Paul's; Tomstown. Rev. Ivan Dambrowitz, 45 Wellington St., New Liskeard, Ont. P0J 1P0; (705) 647-6242.

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Kapuskasing, St. John's. Rev. John Blue, Box 283, Timmins, Ont. P4N 7E2.

King City, St. Andrew's. Rev. Daniel D. Scott, 107 Compton Cres., Bradford, Ont. L3Z 2X7.

Mississauga, Glenbrook. Rev. Ian MacPherson, 1560 Dundas St. W, Mississauga, Ont. L5C 1E5.

Mount Forest, St. Andrew's; Conn, Knox. Rev. Hans W. Zegerius, 125 Mountford Dr., Guelph, Ont. N1E 4G2.

Oakville, Knox Sixteen. Rev. E.R. Fenton, 375 Christina Dr., Oakville, Ont. L6K 1H5.

The Transitions column welcomes announcements of special events such as births, marriages, anniversaries, baptisms and the reception of new members, as well as death notices. The rate is 90 cents per word or \$43 per column inch (the lower amount) plus GST.

All notices of pulpit vacancies, recognitions, ordinations and inductions will be charged to presbyteries: \$10 for the basic notice and 90 cents per word for additional information. (There will be no charge to congregations on the Every Home or Club 50 plans.)

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Scarborough, St. John's, Milliken. Rev. Gerard Bylaard, 3817 Lawrence Ave. E, Toronto, Ont. M1G 1R2.

South Monaghan, Centreville (renewable term, presbytery appointment). Rev. Ken MacRae, 785 Park St. S, Peterborough, Ont. K9J 3T6.

Sudbury, Calvin. Rev. Freda MacDonald, Box 650, Burk's Falls, Ont. P0A 1C0.

Toronto, Beaches. Rev. Jean Armstrong, 662 Pape Ave., Toronto, Ont. M4K 3S5.

Toronto, East Toronto Korean (assistant minister). Rev. Peter Han, 40 Yarmouth Rd., Toronto, Ont. M6G 1W8.

Toronto, Leaside. Rev. Art Van Seters, 59 St. George St., Toronto, Ont. M5S 2E6.

Toronto, Pine Ridge (half-time). Rev. Lawrence Vlasblom, 11 Deanecrest Rd., Etobicoke, Ont. M9B 5W3.

Toronto, Victoria-Royce. Rev. Jim Cuthbertson, 250 Dunn Ave., Toronto, Ont. M6K 2R9.

Synod of Southwestern Ontario

Ailsa Craig, Ailsa Craig Church. Rev. John Bannerman, 342 Pond Mills Rd., London, Ont. N5Z 3X5; (519) 681-7242.

Blenheim, Blenheim Church (half-time). Rev. Evelyn Carpenter, 60 Fifth St., Chatham, Ont. N7M 4V7.

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Burlington, Knox. Rev. David McInnis, 179 Cornwallis Rd., Ancaster, Ont. L9G 4H2.

Chatsworth, St. Andrew's; Dornoch, Latona. Rev. John Hogerwaard, PO Box 323, Dundalk, Ont. N0C 1B0.

Chesley, Geneva. Rev. Bruce Clendening, Box 757, Wiarton, Ont. N0H 2T0.

Crinan, Argyle; Largie, Duff's. Rev. Jennifer Cameron, RR 2, Glencoe, Ont. N0L 1M0.

Durham, Durham Church. Rev. John Vaudry, Box 115, Wingham, Ont. N0G 2W0.

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Teeswater, Knox; Kinlough, Kinlough Church. Rev. Paul Chambers, Box 208, Ripley, Ont. N0G 2R0.

Tiverton, Knox. Rev. Ken Wild, Box 404, Southampton, Ont. N0H 2L0.

West Flamborough, West Flamboro Church. Rev. Ian McPhee, 19 Pearl St. N, Hamilton, Ont. L8R 2Y6.

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Winnipeg, Kildonan Community Church. Rev. Neville W.B. Phills, 21 Valleyview Dr., Winnipeg, Man. R2Y 0R5.

Winnipeg, St. Andrew's (part-time). Rev. Henry Hildebrandt, Box 447, Kenora, Ont. P9N 3X4.

Synod of Saskatchewan

Biggar, St. Andrew's. Rev. M.E. Marsh, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Box 621, Biggar, Sask. S0K 0M0.

Regina, Norman Kennedy. Rev. Deborah Lannon, 2170 Albert St., Regina, Sask. S4P 2T9.

Saskatoon, Parkview. Rev. Walter Donovan, 2119 Louise Ave., Saskatoon, Sask. S7J 3K2.

Synod of British Columbia

Vancouver, Vancouver Korean (bilingual youth minister). Elder S.D. Sohn, 205 West 10th Ave., Vancouver, B.C. V5Y 1R9.

Vancouver, West Point Grey. Rev. Richard Sand, 2733 West 41st Ave., Vancouver, B.C. V6N 3C5.

White Rock, St. John's (full-time assistant minister). Rev. J.W. Mills, 6341 Holly Park Dr., Delta, B.C. V4K 4T2.

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A Child's Way

Written by
Karen Timbers

A page to share with the children you love

GOD PROTECTS A SPECIAL BABY

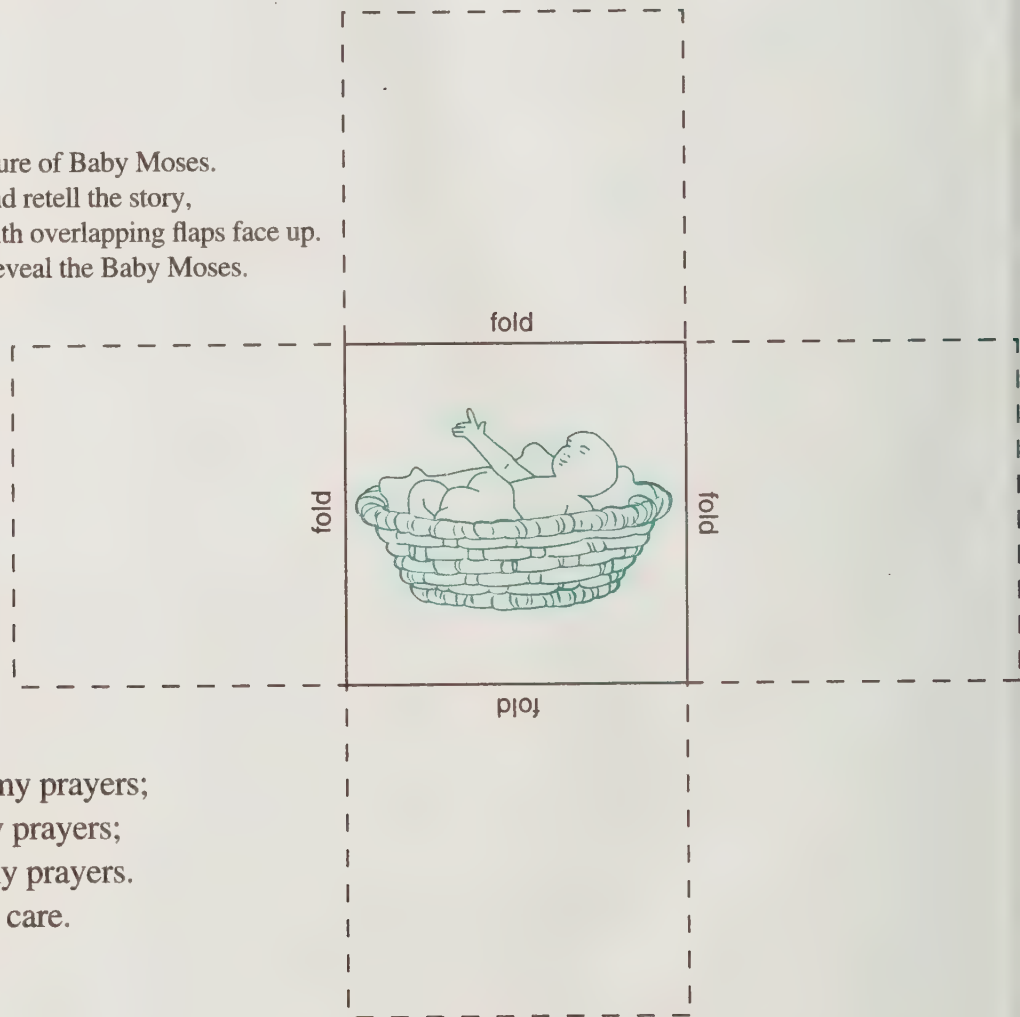
Read Exodus 1:20-2:10 together.

Questions to consider

- Why do you think the king was so afraid?
- What do you think Moses' mother said to him as she put him into the water?
- What would you do to keep the Baby Moses quiet?
- How do you think God helped Moses?

Instructions

1. Cut out along broken lines.
2. Fold the flaps over to cover the picture of Baby Moses.
3. Run water into a sink or bath-tub and retell the story, setting the folded paper on water with overlapping flaps face up.
4. Watch the flaps gradually open to reveal the Baby Moses.



Prayer

Dear God,
When I get up, you hear my prayers;
When I play, you hear my prayers;
When I work, you hear my prayers.
Every minute I know you care.

A note to adults reading this page:

- This year, A Child's Way will focus on children in the Bible. Consider making your own story-book, adding a page each month.
- Consider helping a child in a developing country as a concrete example of how God cares for children facing circumstances similar to Moses.

Rev. Karen Timbers is the minister of Elmwood Avenue Church, London, Ont.

Strength

Martin Marty

Matthew 6:25-34

The gift of simplicity lifts fear from our future. Usually, we store away, far back in the recesses of the mind, Jesus' words to take no thought for tomorrow since God lives there and will care for us. We shelve the assurance "Fear not, I am with you" in mental storage bins. Understandably more vivid are the complications of the doings or the to-be-dones of today and tomorrow.

Almost all of the days' agendas induce fear when they are related to the anxious "I." Will I make the sale or make

mand confess to such anxieties. These all connect with the unknown. The simple gifts, however, deal with what *can* be known about the future, a knowing that lifts and guides us today: Jesus, who told us not to be anxious, gave us reason not to be. A God who loves us is the power of the future. **R**

Excerpted from *When True Simplicity Is Gained*, text © by Martin Marty, photograph © Micah Marty, published by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998. Used by permission.

"We beseech you to deliver us from the fear of the unknown future; from fear of failure; from fear of poverty; from fear of bereavement; from fear of loneliness; from fear of sickness and pain; from fear of age; and from fear of death"

— Akanu (Sir Francis) Ibiam,
Nigeria

the grade — or will I fail? Will my insurance and pension hold out? Will I keep my once secure job? Will that lump on the side of my throat be cancerous? Will I endure the heartache my children or my spouse may cause? Will I cause their hearts to ache? Will I lose my powers and resources as the diminishments of aging work their way and the shadows lengthen? Will I be given strength to face death in anticipation of victory?

Trust no one who claims to have no fears. Off guard and unguarded in quiet, late-night conversations, even those apparently most self-assured and in com-



Photo: Micah Marty



Share the Gifts of a Lifetime.

God blesses each of us in a special way — some with the gift of compassion, others with wisdom and still others with knowledge or understanding. Whatever our gifts, it is when we share them that we come to know God's grace more deeply.

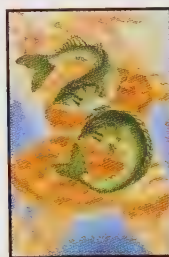
So it is with finances. There are a number of ways you can share in the future work of The Presbyterian Church in Canada — as well as your congregation — other than through your regular Sunday offerings.

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meaning for you. Your financial commitment today will be a living legacy for generations to come.

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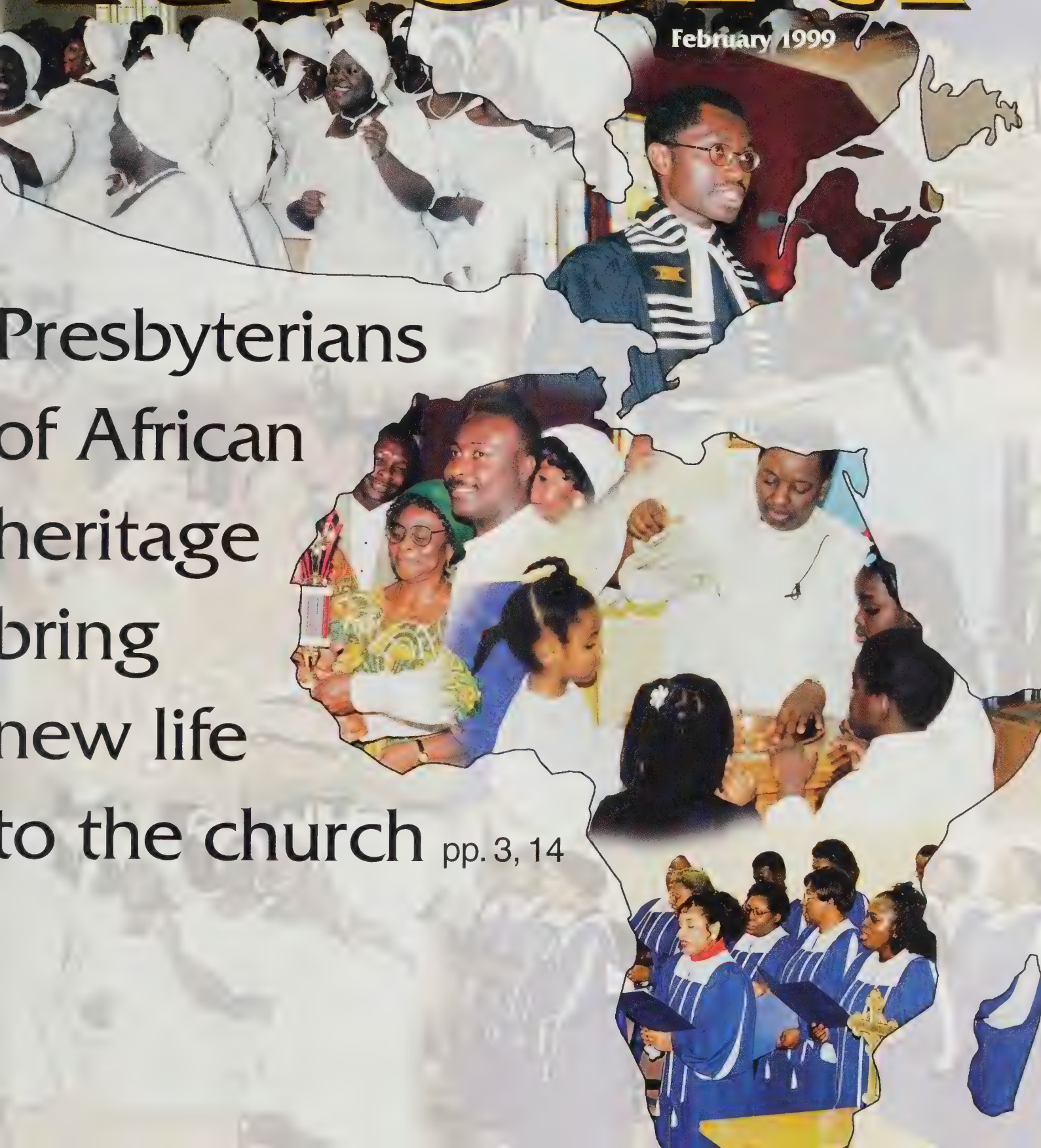
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"Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." 2 CORINTHIANS 9:7

PRESBYTERIAN Record

February 1999

Presbyterians
of African
heritage
bring
new life
to the church pp. 3, 14



The U.S. murder rate is five to 20 times that of industrialized nations without the death penalty.

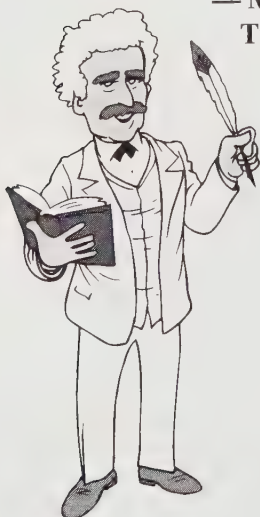
— *Servant magazine*

Welcome

In North Bay, Ontario, in front of the newly built Sunset Park Public School, there is one of those big, free-standing signs that usually advertise brake jobs or doughnut shops. Here, the message shouts out: "Visitors Welcome. It Takes a Village to Raise a Child."

Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great.

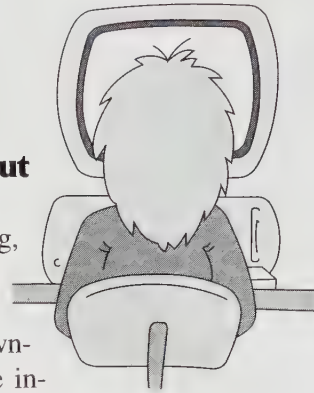
— Mark Twain



It Happens in February

After the birth of twins, one mother had four children under three years of age. Her letters to her sister became shorter and shorter. One day, when winter was in full swing, her sister received a postcard. All it said was "4 kids, 4 colds, 4 lorn."

— James Simpson



Fifty Million Sites but No One to Talk To

Perhaps it's all the waiting, or maybe it's the repeated disappointment with Web sites that won't download or don't contain the information they promise. Whatever the explanation, researchers at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh have discovered that heavy doses of surfing, chatting and E-mailing leave Internet users more depressed and a little bit lonelier than they would be if they stayed off the Net.

— Tom Carpenter in *Equinox*

Christian Equality

From at least the time of my early adolescence, I remember being struck by the egalitarianism of Christianity and moved by the language used to express that equality. Surely, the instruction to "love one another" impels us to equality. Similarly, passages such as "the first shall be last and the last first," "judge not lest ye be judged" and Paul's words that "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female" tell us the distinctions of custom and ambition are precarious before God.

— Garth McNaughton

Our Only Security Is in God

The crisis in the church and the crisis in the seminary are closely related. Each has been distracted from its primary task in mission by the enticements of a secular and cause-oriented society. The church has too frequently forgotten that it lives by the gospel of what God has done for our salvation, not by what human beings have achieved. It has been bewitched by the optimism of an Enlightenment society and by inordinate confidence in what it can do for its own salvation and for the world. It has been enticed by causes good in themselves, but when they become inordinate are self-destructive. No one can doubt the importance of the causes of peace, of justice, of the dignity and rightful opportunities for women, of the environment, of good race relations. Yet, human achievements are always broken and fragmentary. We cannot save ourselves by what we ourselves can do.... Our only security is in God.

The seminary, like the church, has been bewitched by causes ranging from the feminist movement to the environment. It has been enticed by the possibilities of therapy and social engineering. It has too frequently forgotten that the church lives by what God does, not by what human beings do. The church is not the Redeemer. God is the Redeemer.

— from *Crisis in the Church: The Plight of Theological Education*
by John H. Leith

What Do We Focus On?

Do we not have a tendency to focus on rules and procedures, often being blind to the needs of people around us? Do we not have a tendency to wish to remain in the dark on spiritual matters, pretending that a few years of church school are sufficient and believing that what we don't know can't hurt us? Do we not have a tendency to maintain tradition for the sake of tradition, fearing the change that would come if, with the eyes of faith, we trusted God to guide us?... We become so attached to old rules, old habits and old ideas when we know we should put them behind us and go forward in faith.... Like the images of being born from above and drinking living water, the image of sight for the blind reveals the dramatic transformation that *must* occur when we are united with Jesus Christ. We cannot remain the same as before, only with a little religion sprinkled on.

— William Van Gelder



Where Will You Be on St. Valentine's Day?

February has been designated as Black History Month in Canada — an opportunity for all Canadians to get to know and better appreciate the contribution to Canada by Canadians of African ancestry. Many, perhaps most of the events connected with this month will be of a secular nature. However, a few creative Presbyterians — including Paulette Brown, minister of University Presbyterian Church, and Tetteh Akunar, minister of the Ghanaian Presbyterian Church, both in Toronto — have seen this month as an opportunity for Presbyterians of African heritage to share their faith with the rest of the church. As Paulette Brown puts it, “What Christ has done for and with us could enrich the whole church for ministry if we could share it.” With that end in view, a two-day event (workshops on Saturday, a worship service on Sunday) has been planned for February 13 and 14 at Knox Church on Spadina Avenue in Toronto.

I hope this will be the first of many similar events and that it will spawn many new, creative endeavours in this area. While serving as Moderator of our church, my contacts with the so-called ethnic church reinforced my belief that much of the vitality in our denomination is found among these congregations. Many of our churches in the Toronto area would be closed today if not for the influx of people from Africa and the Caribbean.

We need new Canadians. They have become the missionaries to our generation who can deliver us from much of the aridness that passes for Presbyterianism today. They can help us recover our faith. As the old saying puts it, “What goes around comes around.” At one time in history, we sent missionaries to many African countries. Those to whom we once went are now coming to us, providing the possibility for our church to become a more diverse, rich and biblical church.

Despite all the good things we might say about Canada (and there are many), it is never easy to come to a new land. The other day, I had my first encounter with road rage. When the red-faced giant of a man jumped out of his truck at the red stop-light and started for my car, I knew I was in trouble. After a colourful monologue of what he would like to do to my head

and where he would like to send my whole body, he concluded: “And if you can’t learn to *blankety-blank* drive your car, then go back to your own *blankety-blank* country.” And I thought I looked like everyone else. How much more difficult to remain undetected for people of colour.

In December, I attended the 75th birthday party for Conrad Dutchin. Conrad came to Canada in middle age from Guyana via England. He worked among refugees for The Presbyterian Church in Canada and then served on the first federal Refugee Appeals Board set up by the Mulroney government. A number of us had the opportunity to say a few words. I reminded

the guests that Canada is and will continue to be a nation of immigrants. Without immigration, we would disappear because the present birthrate will not sustain our population. Conrad sensitized and helped our church integrate new folk into the church and life in Canada. There can be no higher priority in the church today. Conrad’s birthday bash reminded us all of how much we lose and are impoverished if we fail to welcome new Canadians into our midst.

You will find details of the celebration of Canadian Presbyterian African Heritage in the article written by Paulette Brown on page 14. I hope you will make the effort to participate. It provides a wonderful opportunity to display the unity God has given us in Christ. In the end, despite our many differences, the most defining thing that can be said about us as Presbyterians and Christians is that we are brothers and sisters in Christ.

John Congram

Volume CXXIII, No. 2
February 1999
ISSN 0032-7573

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Design and Production
Tim Faller Design Inc.

Circulation
Eva Breeze, *Manager*
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Published on the first of each month except
August by The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

The *Presbyterian Record*, national magazine of
The Presbyterian Church in Canada, is responsi-
ble to the General Assembly. It exists to publish
issues relative to Christian faith and a selection of
current and timely news analyses and opinions of
interest or importance to Presbyterians across
Canada.

Member of The Canadian Church Press and
The Associated Church Press.

Publications Mail Registration No. 0264
Postage paid at Mississauga, Ontario.
Return postage guaranteed.
Send label only.

Subscription Rates

Individual: \$15
Every Home Plan (80% families subscribe): \$9
Club 50 Plan (50% families subscribe): \$11
U.S.A. and Foreign: \$20
Single Copies: \$2
All prices include GST.

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FROM THE MODERATOR

William
Klempa



Why Celebrate the Year 2000?

Dear Presbyterian Friends:

Even dour Presbyterians — admittedly, there are a few — will have ample reason to celebrate in the year 2000. This significant milestone marks not only 2,000 years of Christian history and 125 years of Presbyterian Church in Canada history, but it also inaugurates the ecumenical jubilee. Therefore, Presbyterians have a splendid occasion to celebrate.

My column this month takes the form of a letter to all Canadian Presbyterians

Yet, authentic celebration can never be a formal and empty act. To celebrate means to look backward with heartfelt gratitude. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits" (Psalm 103:2). We ought to thank God for all that the Christian revelation has meant to our world and for all the way God has guided and guarded our beloved church.

At the same time, we look forward with hope. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (I Peter 1: 3). We should look with eager expectation to all that God still has to accomplish through our church in Canada and overseas in co-operation with our mission partners.

Above all, to celebrate aright involves the renewal and recommitment of our church to share the good news of Christ's transforming grace with our neighbours near and far. Once again, as at our beginnings in 1875, we must become (like the title of Rick Warren's book) a "purpose-driven church." Our purpose must not be sheer survival or simply perpetuating the past. First and foremost, our purpose is the love of God and of our neighbour, the proclamation of Christ's saving grace, the making and teaching of disciples, and the demonstration of God's love in service to others.

Celebrations to mark the millennium, our denomination's 125th anniversary and the ecumenical jubilee will take place in more than 1,000 Presbyterian congregations from Atlantic to Pacific:

- we will bear witness to our Presbyterian heritage
- we will testify to being part of one, holy, catholic and apostolic church
- we will seek to give substance to our celebrations by undertaking a millennium project beyond the walls of the congregation for the benefit of the community.

(Continued on page 8)

Moderator's Itinerary

February 8-9
Heads of Churches meeting

February 14
Morning service, St. Andrew's
Newmarket, Ontario

African Heritage Service at 3:30 p.m.
Knox, Spadina, Toronto

February 17 - March 15
Western Canada visit

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Sudan Situation

It was good to see our Moderator (From the Moderator, December *Record*) bring the plight of the Christians in Sudan to our attention. Some years ago, Brian Stewart of the CBC made the world aware of what was happening in Ethiopia. The results of that report were dramatic. Unfortunately, there has been no "Brian Stewart" to do the same for the blacks in southern Sudan. Their situation has been, and still is, equally precarious — indeed, more so, since it has been successfully kept from the eyes and ears of the world.

*Jake Brown,
St. Catharines, Ont.*

The Inter-Church Coalition on Africa (ICCAF), an ecumenical Canadian agency supported by The Presbyterian Church in Canada, welcomes Moderator William Klempa's reflection on Sudan. His assertion that "the horror that is happening in Sudan calls for special attention" couldn't be more true.

When analysing the civil war in Sudan, care should always be taken not to reduce the conflict to one between Muslims and Christians. Sudanese Christians are, indeed, persecuted by the government of Sudan controlled by Islamic

extremists and political ideologues who see themselves as Arabs. But so, too, are liberal Muslims. Mosques as well as churches have been destroyed; copies of the Koran have been burned as well as copies of the Bible.

Sudan's civil war is not about religion as such. It is about ideology, power and control over resources. Religion is a tool of oppression and subjugation. All Sudanese who reject the extremist policies of the Sudanese regime are targets, be they Christian, Muslim or followers of traditional African religions. The persecution of Christians may have more to do with racial discrimination and hatred and the fact that most are black Africans from the south.

The conflict in Sudan might best be characterized as a racist, dictatorial and brutal regime at war with its own citizens. This portrayal does not ignore the fact that Sudanese Christians are persecuted in large numbers. Rather, it places it in a broader context.

*Gary W. Kenny,
Director, ICCAF*

Seeing the World Differently

For the *Record* (December *Record*) reminded me how tempting it is to be sentimental about the great insight children have into spiritual matters. It takes a little incident such as the following to remind us that children do see the world differently from most adults.

In Saskatoon, there is a Genesis Restaurant. The leader of a children's group in that city handed out Bibles and asked each child to turn to the book of Genesis. A nine-year-old boy, who has been in church school all his life, looked up in amazed disbelief and said, "You mean, they named a book of the Bible after a restaurant?"

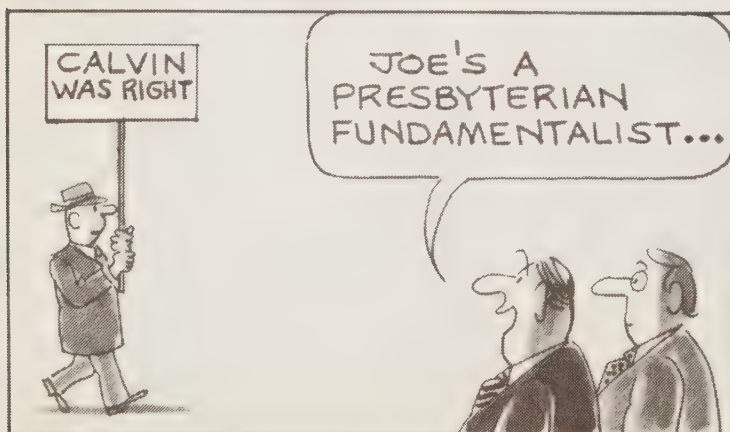
*Georgina Bone,
Saskatoon*

Cape Breton Missionaries

I read with interest the news item "100 years of Canadian mission in Korea" (News, December *Record*). It noted that Rev. William McKenzie and Rev. Glen Davis shared the same birthplace — Cape Breton. One other missionary men-

WATSON'S WORLD

Noel Watson



tioned, Rev. Duncan McRae, was born in Baddeck, Cape Breton, in 1868.

*R. Ritchie Robinson,
Boularderie, N.S.*

Riverside's Roots

I read with interest the article about The Riverside Church, New York City (July/August *Record*).

As one who has many connections to the American Baptist Churches, I would like to clarify certain impressions in that article. Though it is correct to say it has an interdenominational and ecumenical ethos, The Riverside Church grew out of and succeeds the Park Avenue Baptist Church, New York City. Riverside Church is officially incorporated in the State of New York as a Baptist church affiliated with the American Baptist Churches. Upon completion and dedication of The Riverside Church, the congregation also chose to relate to what is now the United Church of Christ.

With regard to homosexual matters, The Riverside Church is a member of the Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists.

In tune with its ecumenical spirit, the congregation adopted an open membership policy — all Christians, regardless of denominational affiliation, are welcome to become full members of the parish. Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, minister of Park Avenue and founding minister of Riverside, said: "To be truly Baptist, we must display the basic tenet of Baptist tradition; namely, freedom of the congregation to govern itself and extend soul liberty to the individual in his or her right to experience God in their own way."

Out of deference to my American Baptist friends who regard Riverside as the cathedral church for their denomination, I thought it only correct to point this out.

*W. W. Wahl,
Edmonton*

Prayers Answered

Thank you for mentioning the plight of the residents of Birdtail Sioux Reserve (News, October *Record*). First Presbyterian Church in Winnipeg is donating

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Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve
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1 Peter 4:9-10



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LETTERS

Bibles, hymn-books and a piano to Bird-tail Church. Rev. Diane Strickland and members of First Church will be going for a Communion service with some people from Anishinabe Fellowship Centre. This was one of their prayers answered.

Denise Fenez,
Winnipeg

Mergers

Merger fever seems to have gripped the corporate world. Banks, grocery chains, high-tech companies are coming together in order to compete better in the global marketplace. I wonder how long it will take before mainline churches follow this trend and, once again, begin to consider the advantages of denominational union?

Gunar Kravalis,
Milverton, Ont.

Not the First

St. Andrew's, Lachine, Quebec, is not the first to differ with Assembly on the suitability of its minister. According to the news of an earlier day, St. Andrew's, Saskatoon, "... prevailed upon Rev. C. P. Bradley to continue in the charge where he had been serving as acting minister ..." Bradley had been ordained in New South Wales. The refusal by Assembly to admit him was apparently based on a deficiency in his academic qualifications. Perhaps, the outcome of that former dispute could serve as a precedent for today's problem.

D. A. MacLennan,
Oakville, Ont.

Informed Believers

I commend the Moderator for his emphasis on the need for informed believers with a teachable spirit. The quote from John Calvin, "There is no true piety without instruction and no true service to God without being educated in God's school," sets forth a crying need within our churches today.

I note the consequences of a basic lack of biblical understanding in the December *Record*. Under Faces of Faith, that beautiful doctrine of grace, predestination, is repudiated. Another writer suggests homosexuals should be allowed

to minister to God's flock. Such shocking statements suggest our need to reaffirm the authority and verity of Scripture.

William F. Clelland,
Calgary

That Tiny Red Bathing Suit Again

I believe Rod Lamb should be congratulated for his review of *The Tiny Red Bathing Suit of Mr. July* (Reviews, October *Record*). Our women's Bible study group read and discussed this book.

It's never easy for the human being who tries to practise Christ's teachings within the church family. We are such a divided group of individuals, constantly looking for our brother or sister to stumble.

Jim Butchart,
Paisley, Ont.

Who is Nancy McCracken? Did she really write that letter (Letters, December *Record*)? No — you must be pulling the collective ecclesiastical leg. Right?

Allen Aicken,
Barrie, Ont.

FROM THE MODERATOR

(Continued from page 4)

It is important our celebrations have our communities in view. The period June 1999 through December 31, 2000, offers a unique opportunity to claim God's promises, to rely upon the grace of Jesus Christ and to invoke the presence of the Holy Spirit as we reach out in mission and ministry to our communities.

I urge every congregation to become involved. The time to organize is short but, with God's grace and help, we can do much. As I visit presbyteries and congregations in the coming months, I hope to meet Celebrate co-leaders and to hear of your plans.

I am counting on your co-operation and I thank you for your enthusiastic support.

In Christ's service,

Bice Klempa



The Effects of Human Sacrifices

Princess Diana's death brought an ancient theological problem to the fore.

No, not the mass media. The media is a new problem, not an old one.

The mass media spent most of the year after Diana's death finding excuses for their role in her death. Although I've worked in the media most of my life, I don't buy their excuses. If a horde of blackflies drives a horse crazy, if a school of piranha attacks a swimmer, if a soldier encounters a hail of bullets, we don't blame the horse, the swimmer or the soldier for taking somewhat frenzied action.

It's futile to protest that the *paparazzi* — the free-lance photographers and reporters who hounded Diana — were merely doing their job. So were Hitler's camp commandants. It's silly to legitimize the paparazzi because people keep buying magazines with their pictures and stories. That excuse would also validate drug dealers, prostitutes and child pornographers. And it won't wash to put all the blame on a drunk driver; without the paparazzi in pursuit, he wouldn't have been pushed past his admittedly impaired limits. The paparazzi caused Diana's flight through the streets of Paris and, thus, her untimely death.

We have laws to prohibit an estranged husband or boyfriend from stalking a former spouse or partner, from invading her privacy against her will. Why should the mass media be allowed — even encouraged — to stalk their victims? Unfortunately, it takes a death such as Diana's to force us to see how one group's privileges have gotten out of hand. And that's the old problem — human sacrifice.



**Often, it takes
a sacrifice
to peel the scales
from our eyes**

Unfortunately, it seems, we always require a death or two to take anything seriously. When a situation gets bad enough that people lose their lives, we finally pay attention — whether it's toxic wastes in our water, poisons in our air, drunk drivers on our highways, or mindless violence in our homes.

Some years ago, when we lived in Ontario, people in the neighbouring borough complained about a dangerous level crossing. The city's roads department didn't listen — until a train hit a school bus at that crossing. The level crossing was replaced, within a year, by an overpass worth millions.

Unfortunately, we have traditionally confused the cause and the effect. If a human life could make a difference, people concluded, let's sacrifice a human and hurry up the process. That's the origin of human sacrifices.

Some 4,000 years ago, Abraham and Sarah lived among people who practised human sacrifice. Abraham thought God wanted him to sacrifice their infant son, Isaac. So he took Isaac up Mount Moriah, now the Temple Mount in Jerusalem, to sacrifice him. But, at the last minute, Abraham heard a different message from God. He realized human sacrifices were not the way to influence God. It was a great leap forward in understanding.

Unfortunately, most people still didn't get it. Twenty centuries later, a man called Jesus lived life the way we ought to live. By his life, he exposed the shallow pretensions of the people of his time — their obsession with power, and status, and position. But they didn't get the message.

Until someone died. Someone who didn't deserve to die. Jesus was crucified as a common criminal, an enemy of the Roman State. Then, a sense of shock forced a few people to change their lives to match his example more closely.

Sacrifices don't cause change as much as they shake our obsessions. They peel the scales from our eyes so that we see things differently, so that we recognize that things have to change. That we have to change.

A few people got that message back then. Perhaps, a few more people will get the message after Diana's unnecessary and undeserved death, too. Perhaps they will exercise some common-sense restraints on invasion of privacy, drunken driving, and the unchallenged privileges of a minority. **R**

Jim Taylor is a writer, editor and co-founder of Wood Lake Books.



An Awful Uplifting Experience

Matthew 17:1-9 and 17:10-20

A few days before Ash Wednesday comes the Sunday called "Transfiguration." This is the event that motivated, inspired and steeled the Early Church for the days of Lent and the cross of Good Friday. The Transfiguration, in George Buttrick's words, "nerved the Early Church." Perhaps we could use some of that "nerving" in our time.

The story begins with Jesus and the disciples Peter, James and John on an unnamed mountain. Mount Tabor is the traditional site, although Hermon better fits the description. The view from both Tabor and Hermon is breath-taking, "awesome" — or "awful" with its meaning of inspiring awe. In the fourth century, a commemorative church was built on the summit of Tabor and, by the seventh century, there were three shrines dedicated to Jesus, Moses and Elijah.

The account of the Transfiguration assumes the account of Moses receiving the Ten Commandments in Exodus (24:12-18). Allusions include "mountain," the time of six days, and the bright cloud — the *shekinah*, representing the presence of God. In this Presence, Jesus was "metamorphosed," transfigured. His clothes were dazzling white; his face was as bright as the sun.

Moses and Elijah, "the law and the prophets," were also present in this vision. It must have looked to the disciples as if the new age had arrived. How about holding on to the experience by building tents, perhaps like the shelters used at the Feast of Tabernacles. If only the experience would continue!

Out of the clouds, the disciples heard

a voice declare: "This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!" It was the voice and the message previously heard at the time of the baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3:17). The disciples were awe-struck — "awful," this time with the meaning of "reverential fear." Awe and fear are intimately related.

According to Matthew (17:9), Jesus called his Transfiguration a "vision," but it was a vision shared with the disciples. The vision was both real and surreal, but the specifics are beyond our grasp. The meaning is clear, however: Jesus is

greater than the law and the prophets.

The lectionary reading for the day does not include verses 10-20, but they are an essential part of the story. The famous Italian painter Raphael saw it correctly when he painted two scenes on one canvas: the mountain and the valley. The two parts belong together: the experience on the mountaintop and the cry from the valley. From the valley, another voice was heard: "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and he suffers terribly; he often falls into the fire and often into the water" (Matthew 17:15). Here was a young man in desperate need, an epileptic. (The literal reading of the Greek is "moonstruck," our word "lunatic." Mark used the word "demoniac.")

The disciples were helpless. In John Fenton's words: "The disciples there and here will only be able to follow Jesus... if they have faith in the power of God to work in them and through them."

Mountaintop experiences do not last long though they can provide long and

supportive memories. Suffering can last a long time but, for most of us, it is quickly forgotten when it is over. Life's mountaintops encourage us, but the work of redemption, of helping and healing, is in the valleys. That certainly was the way for Jesus as the story quickly descended to the valley and continued to Calvary.

Have you noticed that we soon reach our capacity for pleasure and, though we double the effort, we quickly become bored and restless? Two pieces of cake are never as tasty as one, and three will likely make us sick. On the other hand, when we think we've reached our maximum suffering, our capacity for suffering seems to increase.

We live in the valley but are sustained by the mountain. Healthy life consists of alternating between the mountain and the valley, between prayer and service, laughter and suffering, ecstasy and agony. If we tried to stay on the mountain, we would live in a rarefied world of fantasy and illusion. If we lived only in the valley, life would be marked by drudgery and bitterness (Buttrick). **R**

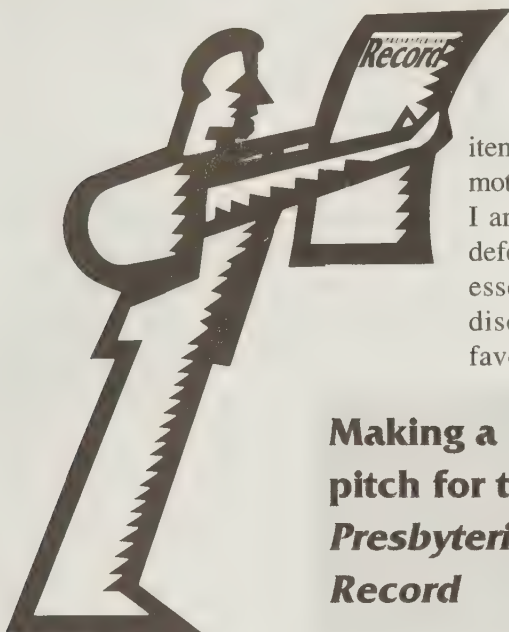
For Discussion and Reflection

- Look up "Tabor" and "Hermon" in a Bible dictionary for a picture and description.
- Think about Peter's offer (17:4) to build a suitable memorial and the three shrines built by later piety.
- Compare the Transfiguration as reported in Mark 9:2-8 and Luke 9:28-36. Was the voice on the mountain and the voice in the valley the same voice?
- How can the Transfiguration prepare you for Lent?
- Describe a mountaintop experience in your life. Where is "the valley" for you?

L. E. (Ted) Siverns is the minister of First Church in New Westminster, B.C.

Were You Asking?

Dick Ford



Making a pitch for the Presbyterian Record

As convener of the *Presbyterian Record* Committee and a promoter of this excellent magazine, I am sometimes asked how my church "sells" the Every Home Plan to the congregation. The answer is simple. The cost of the plan is put in the budget, the congregation approves the budget — it is done.

Next question? What? You tried that, and it was yanked from the budget? Unfortunately, that is too often the case. As the board of managers struggles to make ends meet, and the congregation tires of the constant pleading for money, a discretionary item such as the Every Home Plan is a tempting target. So what to do?

I am tempted to launch into a long sales spiel about the value of the *Record*, the quality of its articles, its importance in bringing a sense of community to the national church and so on. However, I shall resist. Instead, I'll tell you what has worked for our congregation and ask that other churches share their experiences as well. John Congram, our genial editor, assures me he will print your suggestions.

At St. Giles Church in Sarnia, Ontario, we had been on the Every Home Plan for many years but, as happens at many annual congregational meetings, the line

item for the plan was challenged and a motion made to delete it from the budget. I argued forcefully that the motion be defeated. (A strong advocate is always essential.) The sense and tone of the discussion, however, still seemed to favour deletion. At that point, a loyal member of the congregation rose and said he would arrange, organize and promote a beef barbecue with the proceeds going to pay for the subscriptions. That did it! The vote was overwhelmingly in favour of continuing on the

Every Home Plan, and the subject has not been raised since! (I hope this statement doesn't give rise to another challenge!)

A couple of additional comments. We always distribute envelopes for the *Record* with one edition of our church newsletter. The response from our members raises about half the budget item. These envelopes are available free of charge from the *Record* office. Secondly, having it as a budget item, the congregation's *Record* secretary has an easy job. People can opt not to receive the magazine, and a few do; but, otherwise, her only task is to keep the mailing list up-to-date and inform the circulation department of any changes. Since the *Record* secretary does not have to sell subscriptions, the job is a cinch.

So that is our experience. What is yours? Please share your thoughts and ideas. Drop a line to John Congram or e-mail him at jcongram@presbyterian.ca. The Every Home Plan is the heart and soul of our circulation. Every church that cancels or does not join puts us one step closer to losing the magazine. **R**

Dick Ford, an elder in St. Giles Church, Sarnia, Ont., is the convener of the *Record* Committee.

Peter is kind,

generous and able to laugh at himself. Most people like him, right off the bat. He's not highly educated, but he has plenty of street smarts and, generally, gets along fine. Lately, however, things haven't been so great. Peter is dying. He doesn't know the exact date, but it'll be soon. He's losing weight quickly. He was never very big but, now, his face is growing gaunt and his bones stick out all over. And, now, his memory is starting to fail, too. He can't remember where he was going and what he was going to do when he got there. He now depends on others to help with the everyday mechanics of life. We are there for him.

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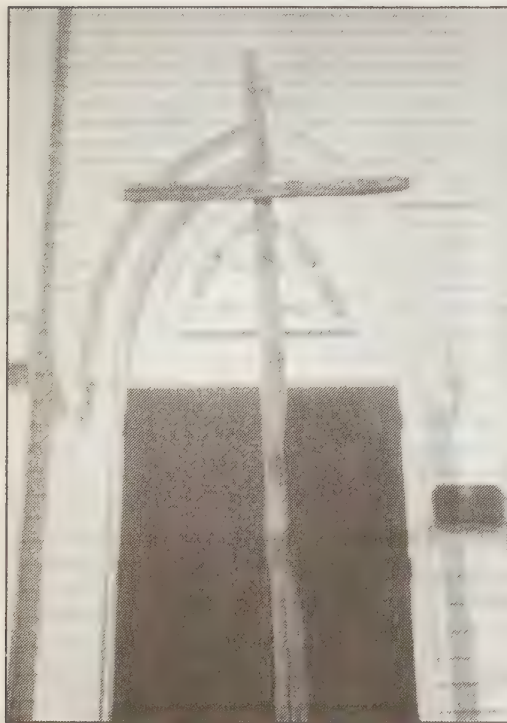
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Ideas for Celebrating Lent



The Fence That Became a Cross

The rough, timber planks that, for decades, rose shoulder high on the north side of the church property rested in a heap out of sight beside the church shed. Happily, the fence that separated St. Andrew's Church in Maple, Ontario, from its neighbours was gone and with it the message even a child could read: "No Trespassing."

Successive summers and winters smoothed the old lumber revealing picturesque knots and a dappled brown colour. In the hands of a skilled worker, two pieces were fashioned into a huge cross. For a number of years, it found a place in the chancel during the 40 days of Lent. Another worker, missing a cross in the church the rest of the year, built a beautiful oak cross that found a permanent spot in the chancel. What to do now with "the old rugged cross"?

With the session's approval, it was installed outside in front of the church, facing the street, during the

Lenten season. It does not go unnoticed. Some people cross themselves as they pass. An elderly woman placed a dozen fresh carnations at the foot of the cross. The most dramatic reaction came from someone who smeared red paint on the arms and the foot of the cross.

Wood that once divided properties and separated neighbours became a vivid reminder of the cross through which we have become friends with God and with one another.

The Cross That Bloomed

Throughout Lent, St. Andrew's Church in St. Lambert, Quebec, focused on various characters associated with the Passion narrative — the thief, Pilate, Joseph of Arimathea, Barabbas, Judas and Peter. Each week, one character was considered, and something to remind the congregation of that person was nailed to the cross; for example, Pilate's sword. On Easter morning, all of these items were piled at the foot of the cross, and the cross bloomed courtesy of the local funeral parlour. The idea for this moving, visual experience of Lent and Easter came from Karla Wubbenhorst who was serving her ministry year at St. Andrew's while attending The Presbyterian College in Montreal. **R**

On Easter morning, all of these items were piled at the foot of the cross, and the cross bloomed courtesy of the local funeral parlour. The idea for this moving, visual experience of Lent and Easter came from Karla Wubbenhorst who was serving her ministry year at St. Andrew's while attending The Presbyterian College in Montreal. **R**

**Two
different
crosses,
one
purpose**



Thanks to Issa Saliba, minister of St. Andrew's, Maple, Ont., and Barry Mack, minister of St. Andrew's, St. Lambert, Que., for sharing these stories with our readers.

My dear editor:

Most people don't know how the second month of the year got its name. Most people don't care. Most people are probably content simply to wait it out ... though it would make a fine non-offensive expletive. As the snowplow fills in the driveway seconds after you have risked a heart attack to clear it, you could mutter, "Oh, February!"

There is even a difference of opinion as to how to pronounce it. The excellent *Oxford Canadian Dictionary* offers *feb-ro-eri* or *feb-jo-eri* as alternative pronunciations, adding the comment, "Although there is a tradition of opposition to the second pronunciation, it is used by educated speakers." Personally, I prefer the first. If ever a month should contain "rue," it is this one.

Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary Unabridged (good for a little while longer) informs us that February was "originally the month of expiation, from *februa*, a Roman festival of purification ... " Expiation and purification both involve rue. Maybe the Romans needed *februa* to get over the excesses of Saturnalia and Natlis Solis Invicti, two of their big whoop-ups into the midst of which our Christian Fathers (for such they were) plunged Christmas, possibly as cover for their own more modest efforts. There was some symbiosis even then. And who but the Romans or, much later, the Calvinists could make a *festival* of purification? Though Calvinists could make expiation last much longer than a month.

Purification might be a good theme for us in The P. C. in C. I have always believed the purest measure of a congregation's strength — at least, as it can be determined by attendance at worship — is not average attendance at Communion, as our statistics in the Acts and Proceedings record, but attendance on an average

Sunday (no baptisms, no Communion, no anniversary) in February.

There would be difficulties, of course. If ministers knew beforehand, they might quietly urge their flocks to new heights: "Free Tupperware to all who bring a guest!" I suppose some might think this to be a calumny against the clergy, but they are human and many guard their "stats" as carefully as professional athletes. I may have mentioned before that I have known a few who count every signature in the guest book as an "adherent," thus widening their parish not only within Canada but overseas.

No, the *specific* Sunday in February would have to be a secret held by the clerk's office, and figures gathered for *every* Sunday in the month as a blind. There would be some lack of fairness because, inevitably, parts of the country would be hit with bad weather; but it should even out. Many annual congregational meetings are held in February, but they can affect Sunday attendance either way. Few months in this day and age are not holiday time for someone, but February does not have a March break and people are still paying for Christmas.

How, you may ask, can we be *sure* the count will be accurate, uninflated? Perfect certainty in these matters may forever be beyond mortal ken, but could we not ask every member of the clergy, at his or her induction, to promise solemnly to report statistical information faithfully and precisely?

I mean, we ask them (at least, in presbytery, meeting before every induction) if they are members of the pension and health insurance plans. It may not be apostolic, but it is deemed essential. (We may soon be asking, if they live with someone of the same sex, to declare they are immediate family or merely good friends.) So I don't think including one



more question would lower the tone. The real question is, I suppose, do we *want* to know?

The year-end saw a whole clutch of articles in the press and features in other media proclaiming a widespread reawakening of interest in "spirituality." Much of this "interest" appears to be a search for a quick hit of transcendence and little more (Jesus without Christianity, Zen Buddhism in two weeks, aboriginal religion via "dream catchers" and an eagle's feather). Perhaps it is more comforting to think of our "real" flock as "out there" some place — hordes of disillusioned and aging yuppies trying to work up the nerve to peak through the stained glass and assure themselves that maybe they won't be bored. After all, aren't we trying to play their tunes?

Or, perhaps, it is enough to be content in the knowledge that Statistics Canada's information indicates there are multitudes who recognize, and take the trouble to spell, "Presbyterian" as the church to which they'd go if they did. (It's more of an effort to write "Presbyterian" than to put "U.C." down.)

Or, perhaps, dear Editor, it doesn't matter. Can you imagine what the marketing mavens would have made of Jesus' statistical performance?

Yours graphically,

Peter Plymley II

Created for Life

by Paulette Brown

The tragic news of a subway killing involving two black teenagers spread like a forest fire throughout the black community in Toronto, scorching our hearts and souls. Phone lines were jammed with grieving, searching women, men and youth sharing common pain and desperation. The wave of premature deaths that rolled over our community, holding our children captive to non-productive life-styles, putting them away prematurely in beautiful caskets, and locking them up in high security prisons, sent sharp pains to the bottom of our bellies.

For a black clergywoman with children — from my own womb and those

who are mine because I am their pastor — the situation became a faith call. It summoned me to revisit my call to be a spiritual leader in my community.

I attended the funeral service. The grief and pain I witnessed among the many children remain with me to this day. I came away a new person, with new conviction and new boldness. No longer can we — the church, church leaders and black church leaders — be content to see black people sitting in the pews and continue business as usual.

The liturgies, the preaching, the singing, the Bible studies, the social programs — all must be interrupted because the Body of Jesus Christ is in deep trouble. The entire body is in trouble because a part of it exhibits a sickness unto death. Out of these pains, intense faith struggles and prayerful reflections, the vision for “Created for Life” was born.

“Created for Life” describes the vision embodied in a special Christian education program at the University Presbyterian Church in Toronto for children from nursery through high school. The program attempts to live out the gospel’s understanding of who Jesus Christ is and what his coming to our world means, as expressed by Matthew and John:

A subway killing mobilizes a black clergywoman to initiate a church school program that is transforming young lives

“I came that they might have life, and have it abundantly” (John 10:10).

“Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick” (Matthew 9:12).

“Created for Life” works to restore the church to its rightful

position as Christ’s healing presence in our communities. The program seeks to identify the sick, name the illnesses and transform the church into a balm yard where healing takes place in and through the ministry of Jesus Christ. “Created for Life” affirms that our black children are created for life, as opposed to abundant and premature death. It affirms their presence in The Presbyterian Church in Canada and seeks to prepare them so that they may claim ownership of their church and participate fully in its life.

The program expands the traditional understanding of church school, using that time to listen to the children, teach biblical reflection, and help to provide them with some of the necessary tools needed to face the challenge of being black and young in our society. It provides for facilitators to be brought into the church to present seminars and workshops on identified needs. It provides leadership training geared for our specific needs.



Nana Boateng, president of the Created for Life youth group, University Presbyterian Church, Toronto.



Junior choir, University Presbyterian Church, Toronto. Back row: Gloria Boateng, Julie Patterson (leader); centre row: Brianca Henry, Mavis Ampefo; front row: Faith Patterson, William Ampofo.

"If the sentinel sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet, so that the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes any of them, they are taken away in their iniquity, but their blood I will require at the sentinel's hand. So you, mortal, I have made a sentinel for the house of Israel; whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me."

— Ezekiel 33:6-7

Supported by St. Stephen's Anglican Church and St. Matthew's United Church, the program was launched with a special worship service in the Lenten season of 1996. The youth of all three congregations were responsible for the shared meditation, which provided us with an understanding of their special needs.

"Created for Life" also received seed funding from the Experimental Fund of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and Glenview Presbyterian Church. The congregation continues to support it through fund raising. Recently, we received financial support from Education for Discipleship in the area of Christian education with an Afro-centric focus.

Through the grace of God, the pro-

gram has come a mighty long way. We have witnessed transformation in the lives of our children. This has been achieved despite our constant struggle to secure appropriate and stable leadership.

As we enter the next millennium, our vision is to see The Presbyterian Church in Canada (not only University Presbyterian Church) claim "Created for Life" as one of its ministry initiatives in the quest for human dignity within its Canadian household.

You can support this quest for wholeness by attending a Presbyterian African Heritage celebration at Knox Presbyterian Church, Toronto, on February 13 and 14. **R**

Paulette Brown is minister of University Presbyterian Church, Toronto.

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Sex Without

Four Presbyterian ministers discuss their responses to three life situations



What constitutes responsible sexual behaviour in today's world? What standards should the church uphold in a society where "anything goes"? How does this play out in pastoral situations?

The editor of the *Record* drew together a panel of four to discuss practical situations that commonly arise in congregations. The panelists are ministers: Jean Morris, Varsity Acres, Calgary; Heather Vais, Alexandra Church, Brantford, Ontario; Kevin Livingston, St. Andrew's Hespeler, Cambridge, Ontario; Mark McLennan, Scotsburn, West Branch, and Earltown pastoral charge in Nova Scotia.

The youth group in your congregation is having a program on teenage sexuality. This was prompted by another congregation in your community that has been promoting a "True Love Waits" program. You are invited to sit on a panel to discuss this question.

HEATHER VAIS: I would be glad to speak to a group about true love waits and give them my opinion.

RECORD: What is your opinion?

HEATHER: I agree that true love should wait. That's what I did, and I would speak from personal experience. I would probably be personal, candid and open.

JEAN MORRIS: I would begin the evening with the church's statement about this in terms of true love waiting for marriage. Sometimes, we're not clear about where the church stands. Then, I think Heather is right: personal experi-

Marriage?

ence and also the experience of others. There is lots of material, studies and research, that gives a different picture from the TV soap opera stuff most kids are exposed to. I would draw on that research and some of the experiences of teenagers who didn't wait.

KEVIN LIVINGSTON: I would want to set a larger context for the discussion with teens and go back and talk about God's perspective on sex. God created sex as a wonderful gift for human beings to enjoy if set within the parameters of his will. Secondly, the Bible is also realistic about how sex can be misused and distorted.

MARK McLENNAN: I was thinking about a youth night we had with a group last year. We discussed marriage and living together. I promoted the word respect. I think that is a big part of what we are talking about in relationships between men and women. I am not sure youth understand what that means. For example, ask them about living together, and they think, Well, you are not hurting anyone, so it's OK. It's a simplistic view of the whole issue. I try to draw them into a larger discussion; but I don't show my hand too early or they will know I am opposed to it and they will draw their toes in.

KEVIN: I would want to appeal to the teens regarding God's principles for living. We call them the Ten Commandments, but that's a negative way to put it. I noticed in our church school material

(we use *Children in Worship*), they were called "The 10 Best Ways to Live." These are God's principles that help us and lead us into loving relationships with others and liberate us from the things that enslave us. I would want to couch it in those terms and to say that I believe God gave us those principles to protect us and to allow us to have the best kinds of relationships we can. We should follow God's principles for living rather than our culture's.

HEATHER: That's what we are really up against — cultural principles. Every television program has young people sleeping together no matter what age they are. It's difficult for youth to look at that and not try to follow it in some way.

MARK: Susan, my wife, is absolutely furious at shows like *Seinfeld*, where going out on a date and having sex with someone is a given. It's part of the process now.

HEATHER: *Melrose Place* is worse because these kids are in their teens and 20s. At least, *Seinfeld* is modelling 30-year-olds.

RECORD: What is the strategy for the church to swim against the stream of TV, beyond merely talking about it?

HEATHER: Role model, I guess. But it's difficult. I was the first person to whom a couple announced their engagement, and I was honoured. Then, they said they were thinking about living together to save money while they were in school.

I told them I supported them in their lives, and I was honoured they would ask me; but, if they wanted my opinion, I would suggest not. That's as far as I could go. They chose not to follow my advice, but I still love them and care for them.

Two members of your church, both divorced, have been a recognized couple for about five years. Although not married, they live together. What would your approach to them be?

JEAN: This is a reality in my congregation. I could see myself in the course of a pastoral call with these people trying to discover why they aren't married. In my experience, this is the result of lots of other issues. My first approach would be to try to understand their relationship and the reasons for the choice they have made. I would encourage people to explore that. A good Christian marriage has some profound possibilities for people in terms of enriching their lives. Lots of times, people don't explore those things. They think that, because they've had a bad marriage, they don't want another one.

HEATHER: I would approach the subject with a couple only after we had broken the barriers down and were on a high level of trust.

Panelists:

(left to right)

Jean Morris,
Heather Vais,
Kevin Livingston,
Mark McLennan.



KEVIN: I agree. I think a relationship of acceptance with people is absolutely essential as groundwork. I also think every minister ought to preach a series on the Ten Commandments every four to five years. Let the word and Spirit speak to people and bring them under conviction about their need. In three or four cases after such a series, people came to me and said that maybe they ought to talk about getting married. I would remain in relationship with them, though, even if they had chosen not to. I would continue to extend, I hope, the love of the Lord to them.

MARK: I appreciate the foundation we are all coming from in terms of the pastoral relationship. And I believe in approaching the situation positively as opposed to being judgmental. Often, in my experience, the problem is the result of bad marriages on both sides — to the point of abuse. I also see it as an opportunity for ministers to take advantage of and to take seriously.

A couple in their 20s, currently living together, asks you to officiate at their wedding scheduled for a year from now. How would you deal with this?

MARK: In my experience, that's almost a norm now. I've never refused a wedding on that basis.

HEATHER: I would thank God they actually decided to get married. I would be more worried about their age than their living arrangement. You said 20s; I hope they would be in their late 20s.

KEVIN: That prompts the issue of doing a better job of marriage preparation. I live with a lot of guilt about this. If a couple is living together or sexually active, after we have gotten to know each other and laid out the Christian foundation of marriage, I ask them to abstain from sexual activity till they are married. I recognize that's hard, but some couples who have actually gone through that discipline told me after their wedding they were glad they did. I don't have any way to enforce it. I am not a moral police officer. But I let them know this is the stance of the church, and we believe it is for their good to grow in their relationship together. I leave it at that.

HEATHER: Very interesting.

MARK: Was the session part of that decision, Kevin?

KEVIN: We talked it through, but I am not sure we had unanimous agreement. I would never refuse people coming to be married if they want a Christian ceremony and they are willing to go through the counselling. But, at one point, I will share with them this perspective and ask them to do that. Then, of course, that's

Resources

Becoming Married by Herbert Anderson and Robert Cotton Fite (Westminster/John Knox, 1993)

Decisive Issues Facing Christians Today [part four: sexual issues] by John Stott (Baker, 1990)

Marriage, Divorce, Remarriage by Andrew J. Cherlin (Harvard University Press, 1992)

Promising Again by Herbert Anderson, David Hogue and Marie McCarthy (Westminster/John Knox, 1995)

Sex for Christians by Louis Smedes (Eerdmans, 1976)

Sex Smart by Susan Browning Pogany (Fairview Press, 1998)

Statement on Human Sexuality: A Study for Congregations, Sessions, Presbyteries and Synods (The Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1996)

Video

Sex, Lies and the Truth (Focus on the Family)

up to them before the Lord and their conscience to live out.

RECORD: Do any of the rest of you make Kevin's suggestion?

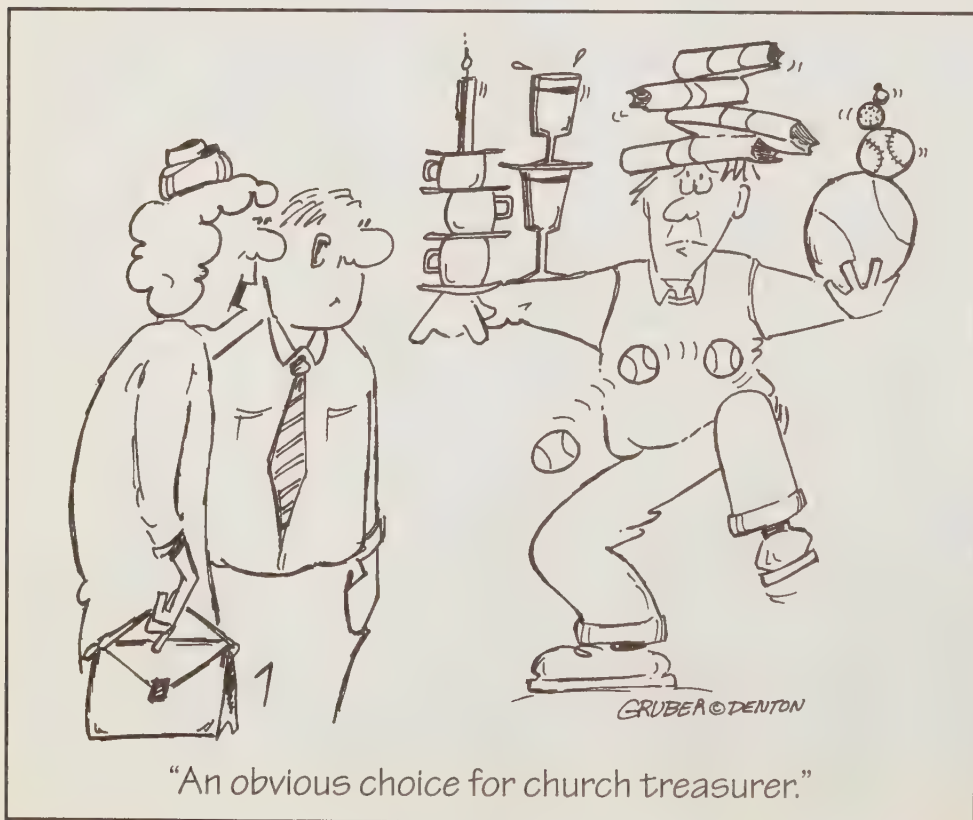
MARK: I have never done so, but I think it's an interesting idea and a gutsy move, Kevin.

HEATHER: I talk to them about sex and birth control and that sort of thing, but I have never suggested that they abstain. Someone whom I know, I might.

KEVIN: I lay out the value I think it will be to them and their sense of joy in living with God's purpose, but I am sure more have broken it than kept it.

JEAN: I have never required or suggested abstinence. I think an important resource for us here as pastors is research that contradicts the myth that couples who cohabit before marriage have greater marital satisfaction. Divorce rates are also higher. My approach with those people is similar to folks who don't cohabit. I discuss where the Christian Church stands, the Presbyterian view of marriage and what the covenant means. People live out the myth that it will be easier if they live together first.

MARK: I have heard people say you wouldn't buy a used car without test-driving it.



RECORD: Jean has raised a good point. It appears that research and statistics are essentially with us here.

HEATHER: For sure.

RECORD: Anything else you want to add?

JEAN: Sometimes, in pastoral ministry, people expect us to have all of the answers. I would encourage the people in scenario three to do some sessions with a marriage family therapist. I often refer, not necessarily for long-term therapy but to someone who has more gifts and wisdom in these issues than I do

HEATHER: I agree, referrals are our best friends. I always refer when I think something is over my head or beyond my ability.

MARK: I brought in a counsellor-psychiatrist who has a practice here locally and who has some church background. She had a session with the teens on relationships. It was one of the best meetings we had all year in terms of getting the youth to respond and talk about the subject. I've never had an occasion to make a referral, but I am not adverse to it. The council of churches does premarital counselling here which we plug into. They set up programs three times a year.

HEATHER: I always give three or four pre-marriage sessions myself. If I've got a batch of couples I am going to be marrying, I have a Saturday afternoon where I bring them together.

RECORD: Final comments, anyone?

KEVIN: Sex is a wonderful gift of intimacy when kept within God's principles.

JEAN: Particularly with youth, it is important to talk about Christian principles and the good history of the church as opposed to the oppressive history of the church — a church that encourages healthy and loving freedom rather than a church that oppresses and is judgmental about this stuff.

HEATHER: For me, all three scenarios stem around making responsible and informed choices. It's not wrong to be a virgin. Maybe we need to have some of the "True Love Waits" dialogue in our churches.

MARK: As pastors, we need to take advantage of the opportunities presented to us pastorally.

RECORD: Thank you for sharing your thoughts on this subject. **R**



Guideposts

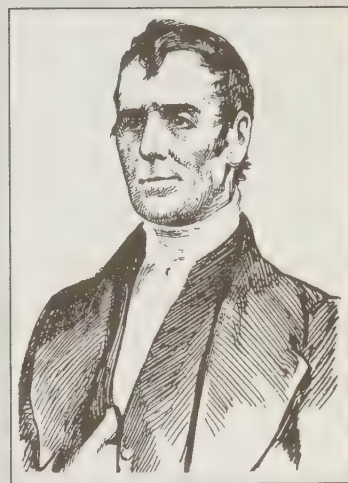
Celebrating Our Heritage

Thomas McCulloch helped found and became the first professor of divinity at the Pictou Academy (1816) in Pictou, Nova Scotia. This pioneer Presbyterian cleric was described by literary critic Northrop Frye as the "founder of genuine Canadian humour." In 1838, he became the first principal of Dalhousie College, Halifax.



Above: Pictou Academy.

Right: Thomas McCulloch's home in Pictou, Nova Scotia, has become a museum.



Thomas McCulloch, 1777-1843



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Faces of Faith



Lois (Freeman) Wilson was born in Winnipeg where her father was dean of theology at United College. In 1950, she married Rev. Dr. Roy Wilson with whom she worked in team ministry for 15 years. Ordained in 1965, she shared pastorates in Winnipeg and in Thunder Bay, Hamilton and Kingston, Ontario. She was Moderator of The United Church of Canada

1980-82, president of the Canadian Council of Churches (1976-79) and of the World Council of Churches (1983-91). Since 1990, she has served as chancellor of Lakehead University, Thunder Bay. She is also a member of the public review board of the Canadian Auto Workers, member of the Centre for Studies in Religion and Society at the University of Victoria, interfaith senator for the Government of Canada since 1998, president of World Federalists (Canada), vice-president of Canadian Civil Liberties. She monitored elections in El Salvador, Chile and Chiapas (Mexico). Lois received the Order of Canada and the Order of Ontario, the United Nations Pearson Peace Prize and honorary degrees from 11 universities. She is the author of five books. The Wilsons have four children and 12 grandchildren.

What is your earliest memory of church life?

Bible stories on slides in the church basement and carting the manse furniture to church for a play by the Young People's Union

What is your favourite biblical book, and why?

Isaiah — lifts up the prophetic face of our faith

What book (outside of the Bible) has most influenced you?

Writing a Woman's Life by Carolyn G. Heilbrun
The Old Testament by Walter Brueggemann

Where do you find inspiration to sustain your faith?

The Psalms, other believers and the secular community

Who has played a major role in your faith journey?

My father and mother, Archbishop Ted Scott, K. H. Ting (China), Barbel von Wortenburg Potter (World Council of Churches)

If you could invite anyone (past or present) to a dinner party, who would you invite?

Rizpah, Prisca, Margaret Laurence, Jean Vanier, Tolstoy, Jane Austen, Wole Soyinka

What is your biggest regret?

That I didn't know at age 25 what I now know

What has been your greatest joy in life?

My husband and children and grandchildren. Worshipping in the ecumenical community

What was your most embarrassing moment in church?

Arriving to preach at an anniversary service at the wrong church — it hadn't invited me

What do you find most irritating about the church?

Its reluctance to engage societal issues informed by a faith perspective

What one change in the church would make it substantially better?

Emphasis on ministry of the laity

What is your main passion?

Other people

If you could live a second time, who would you like to be?

A wilderness guide for canoeists

Write your own epitaph.

She was one who "turned the world upside-down" (Acts 17:6)

A Brief Introduction to

The Nominees for Moderator of the 125th General Assembly

On Sunday, June 6, 1999, the 125th General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada will open in Kitchener, Ontario. At that time, a new Moderator will be elected. As was the case last year, the field of candidates is a small one — three, all with more than 30 years in the ministry. Each candidate has been nominated by at least two presbyteries. Voting to choose a Moderator-Designate takes place prior to Assembly by all members of presbyteries across the country. The Moderator-Designate will be announced April 1.

Robert C. Garvin

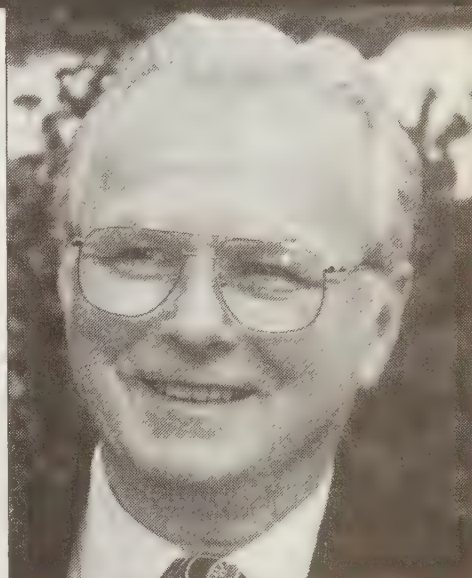
As a Minister of Word and Sacraments for nearly 36 years, Robert Garvin says he has faced many “firsts.” He is now faced with another first — being nominated for Moderator. The situation does not daunt him, however. On the contrary, having moderated and clerked several courts of the church, he feels comfortable with the prospect of serving the denomination’s highest court. As a past member of the Board of World Mission and the Life and Mission Agency committees, he also has some knowledge of the church’s inner workings. He is currently minister of Haney Church in Maple Ridge, British Columbia.

Bob Garvin believes his experience has left him with a combination of administrative and pastoral skills. As superintendent of missions for British Columbia and, subsequently, for Alberta and the Yukon from 1987-1994, he undertook pastoral care for all professional

church workers within these bounds. As Moderator, he would bring a pastoral perspective to the issues at hand. But, above all, he would bring his “love for Christ and his people, his Church and the courts of his Church.”

Garvin is convinced the Presbyterian Church needs to pursue two strong emphases: the nourishing of its members and the encouraging of its non-members. Christians need to be “inspired to deeper commitment to Christ, to Bible study and to prayer,” he says. Congregations also need to be agents of evangelism and revival, bringing the Gospel of Christ to the unchurched.

As Moderator of the 125th General Assembly, Bob Garvin would like to accomplish three tasks: to share with and learn from congregations some effective and creative experiences of growth and outreach; to be a catalyst for the FLAMES initiative established by the



124th General Assembly; and to support the threefold celebration of the millennium, the 125th anniversary of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and the Year of Jubilee.

Bob Garvin and his wife, Carol, have three children.

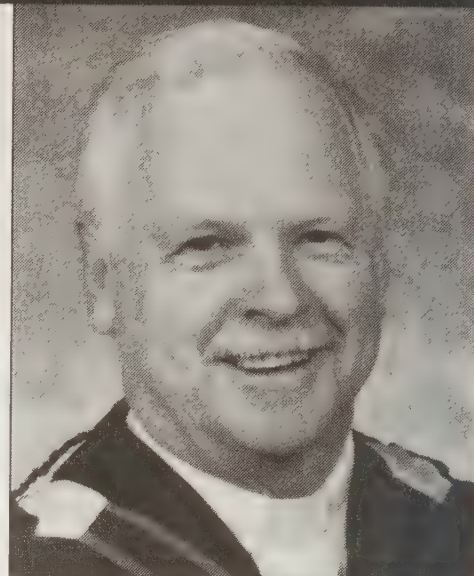
Vernon W. Tozer

During 35 years of ministry in small-town and rural congregations, Vern Tozer has developed an affinity for the rural strength of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. As Moderator, he would give this strength a special emphasis. He believes the church needs to see small, rural congregations as a resource, not as a problem. As senior minister of Knox Church, Listowel, Ontario, for the past 18 years, it would appear he knows what of he speaks. Since 1981, the congregation has increased from 856 members to 1,126 — in a town with a population of 5,300. Tozer also thinks it is important for rural clergy to be involved in their communities. Practising what he preaches, he served for 11 years as a trustee of the Perth County Board of Education, twice as its chair.

Community involvement aside, however, Tozer's primary concerns have al-

ways been pastoral care and serving his congregation. If called by the denomination to serve as Moderator, he would encourage the church to re-emphasize traditional teaching with regard to what being "called" means. He is concerned that we speak too often of job openings and job descriptions, and too little of the call of God to positions of leadership and service.

Tozer would also like to see an emphasis on the preaching ministry within the church. Those who attend worship place a high priority on "a scriptural, helpful proclamation of the Word," he stresses. Sermons should be enjoyed rather than endured. Preaching, though never easy, will be an even greater challenge as we move into the new millennium and beyond, he says. Theological education must have as its primary focus the training of people who will be able to



preach. "It is an inexcusable shame if we make the most exciting news of all, dull and boring."

Vernon Tozer and his wife, Pauline, have two children.



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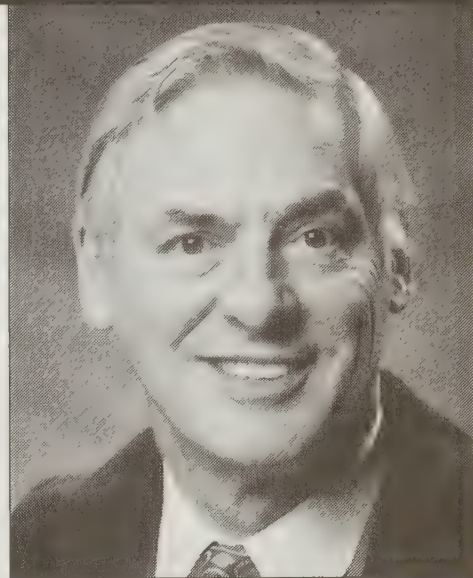
Arthur Van Seters

Like the Moderator of the 124th General Assembly, Arthur Van Seters has spent over 20 of his 34 years in the ordained ministry as an educator. He has been director of the Montreal Institute for Ministry (connected with The Presbyterian College), principal of the Vancouver School of Theology, and is currently principal of Knox College, Toronto (his five-year term ends in June). This experience, coupled with pastorates in New Brunswick, Quebec and Ontario, has given him a love and knowledge of The Presbyterian Church in Canada from coast to coast.

Art Van Seters would make an ideal candidate for a Presbyterian *prix de coeur*, having attended at least 15 General Assemblies. His main goal as Moderator would be that the Assembly act like the Church, with the courage to face difficult questions, the willingness to respect one another's viewpoints and the

patience to work out appropriate responses. He would also welcome "lighter moments that remind us all of our common humanity." After the Assembly, he would seek to be available to congregations and presbyteries to listen to their vision for the church and to share convictions regarding our individual and collective discipleship.

As this century and millennium draw to a close, the church sometimes seems fearful, uncertain of its way. Van Seters wonders if there is not more anxiety than necessary. He believes we need to face our collective angst and discern the heart of God's alternative order that Jesus narrated in his parables. We are rightly worried about not being able to hold our young people, he says, but we can challenge them with the boldness of a Gospel lived in the freedom of Christ. Instead of circling the wagons, he suggests the church open itself to the possibilities of



the proposed celebration of the year 2000 as a Year of Jubilee. "We shouldn't expect this to make sense to the world, but it could reshape our whole notion of what it means to be the Body of Christ."

Art Van Seters and his wife, Rowena, have five children. **R**

ArithmeCode by Dave Mitchell

Find the value of each symbol by doing the arithmetic. Replace each symbol with the letter which corresponds to its value to find the *ArithmeCode* word below. Category: **WEDDING LOCATION**

- i $(16\% \text{ of } 80) + 1.2 = \blacklozenge$
- ii $(\frac{3}{2} \text{ of } \blacklozenge) + (\blacklozenge - 8) = \square$
- iii $(\blacklozenge + \blacklozenge - \square) = \blacksquare$
- iv $(\square \div 9) \times (\blacklozenge - 12 - \blacksquare) = \bullet$
- v $(\blacklozenge + \blacksquare) \div \bullet \div (\bullet + 2) = \blacklozenge$

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z		
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	

The *ArithmeCode* word is:



ArithmeCode answer from last issue: **TRIAL**

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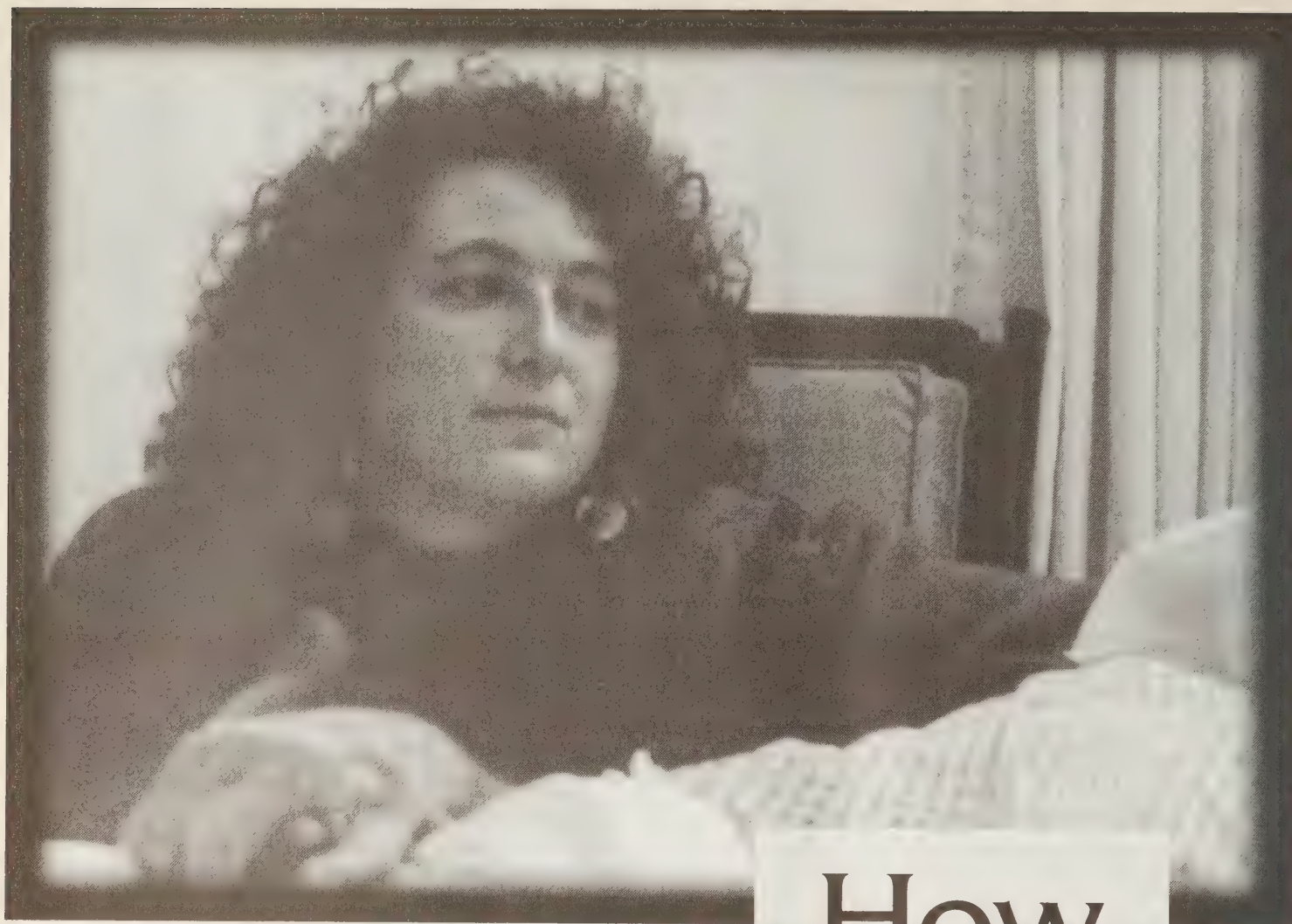
Undefeated

We tend to think of joy as a giddy thing,
a teenager unscathed by life's battering.
Our wounds have made us cautious,
picking our way between the rocks, eyes alert
for the safe, well-travelled path.

It's true, joy is as reckless as a lover, never thinking
about tomorrow's hazards,
not taking out insurance;
attentive to the present wonder,
holding each moment in amazement.
But it's tough-minded, too.

Its songs are heard at midnight from the jail cell.
It blows into flame the smouldering wick,
burning down forests
leaping at the stars on a dark night.
It forces its way up between the concrete sidewalk slabs
laughs through its tears
and everywhere calls things back to living.

— Marianne Jones



How Do You Say Goodbye?

by Dort and Frank Breisch,
Joan Cruickshank, Barbara Vincent

How do you say goodbye to someone who is dying? Because our society has been unwilling to deal with death, most of us find death frightening, mysterious and intimidating.

We have been working for about two years in the Rosedale Hospice of the Hospice Calgary Society, a facility pro-

**Facing
the last goodbye
with kindness
and honesty**

viding terminal, palliative care for cancer patients. Our experiences have altered our ideas about death. We have come to see that death is sometimes welcome, often peaceful and always natural. We have learned a few things that may be helpful about saying goodbye to those who are dying.

Gratefully

To say goodbye is a privilege not everyone has. When people die suddenly, those who are left have no opportunity to say goodbye. The impact of that sudden loss is great. There is often a deep sense of regret for words that were not spoken, for reconciliation that was not effected, for thanks that were not given. Those who die slowly, as with cancer, have time to deal with unresolved issues. And those who are close to them are privileged to share that process and, thereby, to say goodbye.

Honestly

People who are dying are in the process of giving up, bit by bit, all the things that make up life. One of the first things people tend to give up is phoni-ness! Looking death in the eye has a way of making us understand what is real; there is no time left for what is phony. So be honest. Be honest about how you feel about the person's death. Do not be afraid to cry. Let the dying person know you will miss him or her and you will remember her or him. Say what the person has meant to you. Be honest about your relationship to that person; seek any healing that needs to take place. Do not pretend that someone who is dying is going to get better; but do not shatter their hopes if they think a miracle may happen. And be honest about your hope. You need not answer all questions about death. Avoid platitudes, even scriptural platitudes. But do say, in words that come from your heart, the hope you have for life and death. And if you have only questions, be honest about that too.

A question we commonly hear is, "Do you believe in heaven?" What people usually want is an affirmation that death is not the final step, that they will be cared for and loved in a place more beautiful than any earthly setting. As Christians, we can affirm that the final stage of life is really the waiting room of heaven.

Creatively

Try to understand what the dying person needs. Some people benefit from a life review that enables them to relive the joys and sorrows they have experienced. Some like to look through their photo-

graph albums. If you ask them to tell you about their childhood home, picnics and parties, you can lead them into reminiscing that will help them, finally, to close the book of life with acceptance. Some benefit from humour, a party, or an ice cream cone. Use your intuition; listen to your heart! Anything you can do to help a dying person live life to the fullest extent possible is acceptable; nothing the person appreciates is taboo!

Physically

Some dying people want to talk about their impending death; others do not. If they do, then talking about their fears, anxieties, hopes and expectations may be valuable to them and to you. If not, then

gotten and will always be loved. Before you visit, pray for sensitivity to their needs, for wisdom in responding, and for the ability to put aside your own needs and problems so you can focus on them.

Although death can be a frightening experience, for those who have been approaching it gradually over a period of time, death is often a welcome blessing. People who are on the last lap of their earthly journey often overwhelm us with their courage and wisdom. They can often be our teachers; we do not need to come with words of wisdom. But if we come with kindness and honesty and love and good humour, we will be welcome. And we will always be glad we took the time to say goodbye.

**Visit dying people with
no agenda but to love them
and care for them
and help them
in whatever way you can**

there is still a ministry of presence that is important. "Being is more important than doing" is a motto we live by. Simply to be with people is a ministry. When dying people open their eyes and see someone there, they feel loved. To reach out and touch them is to heal the loneliness dying people often feel. You can hold their hands, rub their feet, or sing quietly to them. Be there; that's the first rule. And do not hesitate to hug! Dying people and their families cannot get too many hugs!

Lovingly

Above all else, say goodbye lovingly. Visit dying people with no agenda but to love them and care for them and help them in whatever way you can. Even when their death will sadden you, love them enough to assure them it is OK for them to die, that they will never be for-

The "Presbyterian Connection" has made a significant contribution to the staff of Hospice Calgary. Included are four Presbyterians who collaborated in writing this article. Nurses Dort Breisch, Joan Cruickshank and Barbara Vincent all have clergy spouses. Rev. Frank Breisch served a congregation in Banff, Alberta, prior to retiring and discovering a new challenge in ministry as the chaplain for this new facility which provides a caring place for those in their last days of human living. The four may be reached through Hospice Calgary, Foundation Building, Third Floor, 628 12th Ave. SW, Calgary, Alta. T2R 0H6. ☐

This article was published first in the Spring 1998 issue of the *APCE Advocate*, publication of the Association of Presbyterian Church Educators, Inc. Reprinted with permission.

Taiwan Surp

W

hen we arrived in Taipei, the capital city of Taiwan, the Canadian Trade Office presented my husband, Charles, and myself with a brochure. Inside, we found a colourful, glossy, 25-page booklet entitled *Dr. George Leslie Mackay 1844-1901 Canadian Missionary, Educator and Medical Worker in Taiwan (1871-1901)*. It immediately captivated our interest. A visit to a foreign country had become more intimate and personal. We were amazed to think that, in 1998, the liaison between Canada and Taiwan was a Presbyterian missionary.

In April 1998, I accompanied Charles, member of Parliament for Miramichi, New Brunswick, when a delegation of Canadian parliamentarians visited Taiwan. My only connection with Taiwan until then was articles in *The Presbyterian Message*, a publication of the Atlantic Mission Society. I had read of Georgine Caldwell, Joy Randall, Lillian Sparling, Jack and Betty Geddes, Ted and Marilyn

Ellis, Paul and Mary Beth McLean. I remembered how my mother-in-law, until her death, had faithfully corresponded with Ted and Marilyn Ellis.

I warmly recalled her pleasure when Ted Ellis visited her home.

While reading the brochure about Dr. Mackay, I wondered about Canadian Presbyterians working in Taiwan. I thought of Jack and Betty Geddes. After a challenging struggle with the Taipei telephone directory, I contacted Betty. It was exhilarating to hear her voice.

"Are you aware," she asked, "that the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT) is meeting this week in the auditorium of the Mackay Memorial Hospital in Taipei?"

Our schedule allowed us to visit the General Assembly of the PCT for a two-hour morning session. Entering the main doors of the 1,600-bed Mackay Mem-

A Presbyterian's remarkable impact on Taiwan

orial Hospital, we were struck by an imposing mural depicting Dr. Mackay extracting teeth from the native people of Taiwan. (Mackay estimated he

extracted more than 21,000 teeth during a 20-year period.)

We located seats equipped with simultaneous translation in the auditorium. The president of Taiwan was addressing the Assembly. I turned to the man sitting next to me, and remarked, "It's impressive that the president of the country is addressing your Assembly."

"Yes," he smiled. "You know," he continued, "President Lee is a Presbyterian. He attended the Mackay School in Tamsui."

How remarkable! In a country half the size of New Brunswick, but with a population of 22 million, of whom one per cent is Presbyterian, the president is a Presbyterian.

During the break, we chatted with Jack and Betty. Betty has worked for many years as inter-board treasurer of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan. Jack's duties revolve around the students at Tamkang University.

On our last day in Taiwan, the Canadian delegation visited Tamsui. Everywhere we went in the area, people knew of George Leslie Mackay.

At Oxford University College, Mark Fong-Ming Hwang, head chaplain of the college, accompanied us as we toured the site. The new church with its four-storey organ and open-Bible pulpit impressed us. One of the most interesting stops was at the original Oxford College building that houses a museum of Dr. Mackay's artifacts, including his many photos and notebooks. In this red brick building,

rise

by Patricia Hubbard

the first class of 18 students had met in 1882. Today, the student population exceeds 5,000.

Through the Canadian Trade Office brochure and the displays in the Oxford College museum, the life and work of this remarkable Canadian unfolded for us. George Leslie Mackay was born in Oxford County, Ontario, in 1844 of strict Calvinist parents who had immigrated from the highlands of Scotland. Even at the early age of 10, he aspired to become a missionary. After graduating from Knox College, Toronto, and Princeton Theological Seminary, New Jersey, he completed his training for the ministry in Edinburgh. In 1871, he was chosen as the first foreign missionary of the Presbyterian Church from Canada and was assigned to China.

In March of 1872, Mackay arrived in Tamsui, on the northern part of the island of Taiwan. Devoted to his belief in evangelism and inspired by the scenic beauty, he set up his mission in the densely populated area of northern Taiwan. In his book



Charles Hubbard, Pat Hubbard, Betty Geddes and Jack Geddes at Mackay Memorial Hospital, Taipei, site of the 45th annual General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan.

From Far Formosa: The Island, Its People and Missions, Mackay relates how he overcame the people's fear of him, how he changed his appellation of Black Devil (he had a long, dark beard) and how he struggled to learn the language. He tells of strenuous journeys taken on foot or by boat along the coast. Although most of the churches he established were relatively close to his home base at Tamsui, many were accessible only by long, hazardous treks. The strength, spirit, enthusiasm and commitment of the man are evidenced by the ever-widening circle of churches he established.

One year after he arrived, he baptized

five converts and assigned one of them, his student, to preach. This was typical of the means he employed to establish a self-supporting church and an indigenous ministry. By 1880, Mackay had organized 20 congregations and trained preachers to minister in each of these churches.

With 20 churches operating, Mackay realized he needed schools to train ministers and facilities to improve his medical work. He returned to Canada where he received financial support for these endeavours. The people of his home county in Ontario raised sufficient funds for a seminary — called Oxford College in recognition of their donations. The



The Canadian delegation being addressed by Rev. Mark Fong-Ming Hwang (in white shirt) outside the original Oxford College building, Tamsui.

Woman's Foreign Missionary Society followed with contributions for the construction of a girls school for training Bible women. A Detroit widow sent money to establish a hospital in memory of her late husband. The "busiest man in China" had certainly been active while on furlough. As well, he had received an

honorary doctorate from Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario.

When he returned to Taiwan, Mackay continued to establish churches and pursue his education objectives. In September of 1882, the Tamsui Oxford College opened with 18 students. In addition to theology and Bible courses, it taught his-



Pat Hubbard, Rev. Mark Fong-Ming Hwang and Charles Hubbard behind the open-Bible pulpit and in front of the organ at the Oxford College Church, Tamsui.

tory, ethics and natural sciences. It was the first Western college in Taiwan. The Tamsui Women's College opened in 1884 with 34 students. Throughout the 1880s, the congregations continued to grow until there were as many as 60.

In 1900, Mackay learned he had throat cancer. Gradually, he became unable to speak or eat. He died on June 2, 1901, in his home at the age of 58. Fittingly, his motto had been "Rather burn out than rust out."

Before leaving Tamsui, we stood on the hill overlooking the Tamsui River and thought about George Leslie Mackay arriving there 116 years earlier. He wrote in his journal that he had looked north, south and far inland to the dark green hills, content that this was the land to which he had been called.

We had come to visit Taiwan, a group of Canadian parliamentarians. To our surprise, we had met a spiritual hero who had exerted an enormous influence on this island through his work as missionary, educator and medic, especially among the country's aboriginal people. He established a lasting bond between two countries an ocean apart. **[E]**

Patricia Hubbard is a member of St. Stephen's Church, Sunny Corner, N.B., and a member of the Atlantic Mission Society.

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THE CURRENT STATE OF RELIGIOUS LIFE IN RUSSIA

by Jonathan J. Fraiss

**It is the Russian
pastors who need
support in freeing
the masses from the
opiate of communism**

In any representative poll of religious belief in the Russian Federation, half the respondents will call themselves Russian Orthodox. Such research will also show that Islam, Judaism and Buddhism are significant minority groups. It is these four groupings which were given preferential treatment in the law on religion of September 1997. The Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations Act said these groups represent the historic faiths of the Russian people and, therefore, deserve full freedom to operate. All other groups require 15 years with minimal attempts at evangelism before being considered for full legal recognition.

So where are the Buddhists? They are largely in the east, on the borders of China and Mongolia. What about the Jews? Many of them have emigrated to Israel since this was permitted 10 years ago, but others still remain in areas allotted to them under Stalin's regime. And the Muslims? They are concentrated in lands near the Caspian Sea. If Chechnya broke totally free from Moscow's control, it would become a Muslim state, as would nearby Dagestan. The growth in the Muslim population is assisted by high birth rates, even though Russia has a declining population overall. (Russian families are usually small because of poverty,



small homes and restrictions on land use.)

Along with the religious are the irreligious. After two generations of Bolshevik indoctrination, many older people proudly retain their loyalty to atheism. They do not believe all the revelations about Communist purges and, today, they fondly recall past days of full employment, prompt payment of wages, health care for all and military prowess.

Does this mean much of the nation is actively Orthodox? No. Actual attendance at church on a Sunday is under five per cent of the nation.

The collapse of the Soviet Union witnessed the arrival of many overseas mis-

Rome and Orthodoxy parted company. The Orthodox Church restricted images to two dimensions (so icons, not statues), found the status of the Pope over-exalted, said in the Creed that the Holy Spirit proceeded "from the Father" but did not add "and the Son" (the *filioque* clause), and played down the notion of a moment of conversion in favour of a lifelong process of growing into God (deification).

In the past thousand years, the church has changed little. There has been minimal impact from the Renaissance and the Reformation. The Enlightenment and theological liberalism have passed it by. And colonial missionary advance and

thank you for your gift and pray for you. He may be young, fresh from a hurried training in a newly established and under-resourced seminary, and living on a small salary. (If he married before ordination, he is a "white" priest and will be in parish work all his life. If he did not marry before ordination, he is a "black" priest or monk and will always minister as a celibate. From these exclusive ranks are drawn the archpriests, bishops, metropolitans and patriarchs of the future.)

The Muscovite version differs in size rather than form. There are more churches, more church bookstalls, more priests and more churchgoers here than anywhere else. Yuri Lushkov, the powerful mayor, has supported the cause of the church strongly in his six years in office. More than 100 churches have been reclaimed and restored so far in the centre of Moscow alone. (There were 160 in a much smaller capital at the time of the revolution in 1917. The summer sun glinted off the golden onion domes on every street corner and gave the city the name "The City of Gold." Then, the Communists either demolished them or used them as offices and hostels. The rebuilding work today is also financed through the church's active work as a tax-free trading organization.)

Pride of place goes to the new Christ the Saviour Cathedral near the Kremlin. At a cost of tens of millions of dollars, this large construction replaces the original of the past century, which Stalin dynamited in the 1930s. (He intended to replace it with a huge Palace of Soviet Congresses but, when the basement repeatedly flooded, he settled for an open-air swimming pool.) In operation, the churches are busy with baptisms, weddings and funerals during the week, and maintained by a choir and devoted core of supporters on Sundays. Churches are full for Easter.

That is the official religious landscape of modern Russia. But it is only half the story. After all, against whom was the new religious law directed? The answer: independent Orthodox congregations that have broken free of the Patriarch, cults such as the Mormons which have considerable financial backing from abroad, Roman Catholic and Lutheran churches which have only recently re-

Several politicians think only the Orthodox Church can hold Russia's 89 regions together

sionaries, but there has been no revival. True, between 1989 and 1994, there was a great openness to the Gospel; but this has subsided and been overtaken by the rush for material acquisition. (There was a mass give-away of Christian literature at the start of the decade. Many Russians who visit an English-speaking church in Moscow still assume all literature is free.) Yet, Orthodoxy has taken on a high profile. With Communists out of power and the army in no shape to do anything, many have turned to the church to give shape to their nationalist feelings. Several politicians think only the Orthodox Church can hold Russia's 89 regions together. So when a visiting dignitary arrives at the Kremlin, Patriarch Alexy II is often photographed alongside President Yeltsin.

Orthodoxy (meaning "right-worshipping") is an international phenomenon that claims unbroken succession with the apostles and great faithfulness to the seven ecumenical councils of the first seven centuries after Christ. Friends praise it for its living patristic theology; critics question whether there is too much similarity to Old Testament sacrificial ritual in the weekly Eucharist. In 1054,

Vatican II have been ignored. Orthodox services remain long, colourful and replete with prayers to Mary and the saints; its liturgy continues in an ancient tongue called Church Slavonic although the Trinity, the creeds, and the Lord's Prayer feature prominently. The Holy Synod retains control of the Patriarch and tight discipline over its clergy; and priests in long beards and black cassocks continue to bless people and places with prayer and a sprinkling of holy water. It is frequently national in character and is a strong force in Greece, Serbia, Romania, Bulgaria and Georgia, too. The wealthiest congregations are abroad in the Orthodox Church of America. These support the mother congregations.

Orthodoxy has two faces in Russia — the provincial and the Muscovite. In the provinces, there are little communities that try to raise money to restore the plasterwork on the old church in the village. Old ladies polish the brass, pray before the icons and sweep the floor. They sell books of prayers for private meditation and candles to light and place before the icon wall which adorns the front of the church. Sometimes, the priest will stand in the street with a collection box,

opened for business, and Protestants such as Baptists and Pentecostals which are growing well across the country. The limitations of the new law have been side-stepped by many Protestants whose longest-standing churches have shared their registration with newer groups.

But problems still abound for Protestants, especially in Asian Russia (east of the Ural Mountains) where contact with the Western church is minimal. Three lingering issues from Soviet times concern registration, tongues-speaking and legalism. Registration under communism closely regulated church activities but also brought an end to harassment of believers at work and home. But those who registered were considered weak in faith by those who did not register and who continued to endure persecution as a result. Resentment and misunderstanding continue, although time brings a measure of healing.

Tongues-speaking is another continuing cause of division. In the old days, the Baptists suspected the Pentecostals of demon-possession because they spoke in tongues, and the Pentecostals suspected

the Baptists of not being Christians because they did not speak in tongues. For some, the situation remains as stark as that.

By contrast, the issue of legalism is common to all Protestants who endured the dark days. The survival mentality produced a Christian subculture that dictated principles for clothes, hair-styles, work possibilities and leisure options. Even today, it is not only the cross of Christ that is a stumbling-block to unbelievers.

Newer issues include false teaching, personality cults and "Rice Christians." False teaching is inevitable when growth is dramatic and seminaries few. In this environment, personality cults grow up around charismatic leaders. Their close following dulls the leaders' spiritual senses and, in their immaturity, they place their opinion above God's word. Rice Christians are those who attach themselves to any visitor from a wealthier nation. The preacher's meetings are opportunities to learn English, offer the prospect of free gifts, and may open the doorway for emigration. The numbers look great on the missionary report, but the true harvest is still far off.

Many people in the West have supported missions to Russia over the past 10 years. What have these achieved? At best, they have made the most of an open window of opportunity to preach the gospel and see souls won for Christ. They have also brought different approaches to ministry and witness. Many are to be congratulated for their hard work and pioneering spirit. However, the picture is not all good. At their worst, Western missions have wasted money through needless duplication of resources, confused their hearers through lack of co-ordination and petty quarrels, and have shown great insensitivity to the traditional Christian witness which has been written off as ignorant and apostate. The greater and longer-lasting fruit has been coming from the renewed labours of the Russian pastors themselves. It is these heroes of the faith who need outside support; to such a strategy, Western involvement should now turn. ■

Rev. Jonathan J. Frai is assistant chaplain at St. Andrew's Anglican Church, Moscow.

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Sharing the Good News Through Story-Telling

by Craig Cook

Want to hear a story? The probable answer is yes. Most people enjoy a good story. Stories are our main means of communication. They form the primary way we share our experiences with people. The events of our lives are remembered chronologically, like chapters in a book. We learn about other people through the stories they tell. Each of us is our story.

Stories travel through story-telling. A good story begs to be told. I almost began to write a good story here, but it wouldn't be the same. Story-telling is not the same as story-reading.

Telling a story is an oral activity. Story-telling creates a dynamic relationship between the teller and the listener which does not develop through the writ-

**Christians need to
recommit themselves
to the ancient art of
story-telling which can
bridge cultures and
generations**

ten word. In story-telling, there is the opportunity for eye contact between teller and listener. A good story-teller makes each listener feel the story is for him/her alone and that they are part of the story. In fact, many story-tellers encourage listeners to participate in the telling.

Story-telling reminds us of our childhood when we told stories with our

friends, perhaps at camp or in some favourite place. Story-telling builds and strengthens community. As we share our deepest stories, we form connections with our audience. Our stories are the most precious gifts we have to offer. Through them, we give our true selves to others.

Story-telling was an important aspect of family and community life for countless centuries. Almost all peoples valued story-telling and the elders who were the story-tellers. This was the primary method for saving the culture's heritage and passing it on from generation to generation. Story-telling around the central fire was the tool by which communal knowledge was disseminated.

Story-telling has remained a strong part of Jewish heritage in the retelling of stories from the Old Testament. Chris-

Suggestions for a Story-Telling Program

1. A good way to begin is with a brief review of each person's day. This ought to include "highlights" as well as "lowlights."
2. It often helps to get things started when there is a theme for the story-telling. This should be announced prior to the event so people can prepare a story. Telling a story is easier when you have thought about it for awhile before telling it to an audience. Tell it out loud to yourself at least three times before subjecting an audience to it.
3. People should sit in a circle so all members can be heard and seen.
4. *Everyone* capable of speaking, regardless of age, should be encouraged to participate. But there needs to be the option to pass. We don't *always* feel like sharing a story.
5. Set the mood. It is important everyone feels comfortable. Sitting near a fire can be helpful. Another suggestion is to use a candle with low lighting or no lights at all.
6. Eliminate or discourage interruptions: unplug the TV and the phone. Turn off the computer.
7. Stories to start with: Bible stories, fairy tales, myths, legends and fables.

tians need to remember the gospel springs from an oral story-telling heritage, too. The meaning of "gospel" can be traced back to "God," meaning "that which is good," and "spell," meaning "magic power." The gospel, then, is a story filled with God's power. For Christians, the stories of Jesus reveal God's character. Sadly, in churches today, the gospel seems to have lost its rich oral tradition. In fact, the telling of Bible stories has become an unknown art within Christian communities.

The stories of the Bible become more meaningful when we see how they connect with the experiences of our lives. As we hear the stories others tell, we become aware how similar our stories are. Seeing the intersections between our/my story with the stories of Scripture shows us how we are part of God's story. It is usually at those places where we sense God's story connecting with our/my story that we truly know the Word and see God's revelation. In those moments of story, we feel the Spirit of the living God. As followers of the master story-teller, we need to renew our commitment to the gospel and become better story-tellers. **R**

Craig Cook is a minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada living in Stoney Creek, Ont.

Things to Remember in Story-Telling

1. The story-teller needs to like the story. If you don't think it's a good story, why bother telling it? Your heart needs to be in the telling.
2. The story should be appropriate for the audience. Don't tell stories suited for adults in a room full of children.
3. Tell the story from your heart. Don't read it and don't try memorizing a story.
4. Short stories are good to start with rather than long ones

Preparation for Story-Telling

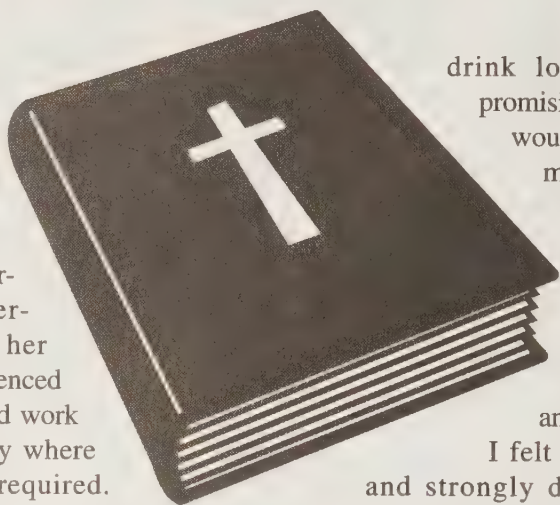
1. Read the story at least three times or until you can tell it without the book.
2. Plan a beginning and an ending and know the route from the one to the other.
3. Tell the story out loud to yourself until you feel the story is yours. Don't forget gestures and any props required to strengthen the telling.
4. Tell your story to a small group of trusted family or friends before you tell strangers or a larger group.
5. Don't rush. Speak distinctly.
6. Have fun!

A Memory Revisited

by Evelyn Ball

She lay in a hospital bed in Ottawa, unable to speak or understand a word of English. Only weeks before, Katherine came from Germany to live with her daughter. An experienced seamstress, she found work in a clothing factory where little English was required. Her daughter was on a week-long business trip to Chicago when Katherine was taken by ambulance to hospital for a serious operation.

Moved from intensive care, Katherine watched as ward aids brought trays of food to the women sharing her ward. Her own trays held only liquids. She could not understand those who urged her to



drink lots of fluids, promising solid foods would follow. One morning, she threw her cup of tea across the room, then buried her head in her pillow and wept.

I felt sorry for her, and strongly drawn to her.

Pulling on a robe and slippers, I crossed the hall to her doorway. She looked at me through reddened eyes. She did not return my smile.

As I walked closer, I noticed a Bible on her bedside table. I picked it up and held it to me. She snatched it from me and turned her head away. I returned to my room and sat on my bed.

"O God," I prayed, "please help me to help her." I picked up my Bible and crossed the hall again. I showed it to Katherine, then held it to me. Her face brightened. She picked up her Bible and held it close. Then we hugged.

In the days that followed, she took liquids from me, then solids. Gradually, her health improved.

Returning from her trip, her daughter shed tears of gratitude. As her mother regained health at home, she kept me informed.

Katherine has since returned to her homeland to be with her son. Unable to understand the language, she found life in Canada too difficult. But with God's help, a bond remains between us that distance will never diminish. **R**

Evelyn Ball is a member of St. David and St. Martin Church in Ottawa.



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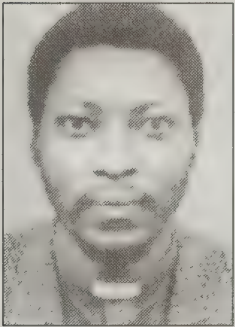
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PCC News

Kenyan editor finds *Record* a good example



This past June, The Presbyterian Church in Canada received a request from its partner church in Kenya, the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA), asking that Rev. Joseph Ngare be allowed to spend a six-week in-service training with the *Presbyterian Record*.

Joseph is in charge of the communications department of the PCEA and is editor of the denomination's quarterly magazine *The Jitegemea*. Apparently, he had surveyed the various church magazines that come to the PCEA national office and decided the *Record* was the one he wished to

visit. Subsequently, he worked with the *Record* from October 4 to November 18, returning to Kenya before he had a chance to see snow (Oh lucky man).

It was very much a two-way exchange. The staff of the *Record* enjoyed Joseph's warm and friendly presence, and it is debatable who learned the most from whom.

Crieff Hills restructures

Crieff Hills Community, The Presbyterian Church in Canada's national conference and retreat centre located in Puslinch, Ontario, has restructured to meet the changing needs of the several markets it serves.

"We are already recognized as a place apart ... with excellent facilities, situated in one of the most beautiful and peaceful locations in eastern Canada," says David Huggins, chair of the Maclean Estate Committee, the board which oversees the day-to-day operations of Crieff Hills. "Our emphasis on customer satisfaction and competitive pricing makes this versatile conference centre the ideal setting

for personal and spiritual growth."

The board has appointed a program advisory committee to assist in the definition and fulfilment of emerging demands and plans to appoint a spiritual leader to help the centre live up to its mandate as a model Christian community in service to laity and the community in general.

As of January 1, 1999, the new managing director of Crieff Hills is Rev. Greg Sumner. For the past 3 1/2 years, he served as director of administration for the centre. He succeeds Rev. Robert Spencer, who was primarily responsible for the establishment and growth of Crieff Hills over its initial 24 years.

Presbyterian couple receives ecumenical award

In recognition of their contribution to Christian unity on the local level, the 1998 Ecumenical Leadership Award has been presented to a Presbyterian couple, Rev. Walter and Gaye Donovan of Calvin-Goforth Church in Saskatoon. The annual award, given by the Canadian Centre for Ecumenism (CCE) in Montreal, seeks to promote grassroots ecumenism.

CCE director Diane Willey cited some of the moving letters in support of the Donovans, which affirm that "few have worked more tirelessly than this couple to remove the walls that

separate us." Walter and Gaye have faithfully participated in ecumenical Lenten services, the annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, the exchange of pulpits and choirs, and have hosted ecumenical Bible studies.

The selection of recipients for the 1998 award was made at a meeting of the CCE directors this past October. Shocked by the news of the sudden death of Gaye Donovan in early November, the directors opted not to change their selection, but to honour in this way the memory of Gaye and Walter's shared commitment to ecumenism.

Presbyterian woman working for slave redemption in Sudan

A Presbyterian woman from London, Ontario, is spearheading an effort to raise money for the redemption of slaves in Sudan. Jane Roy, a member of Elmwood Church in London and an assistant director of that city's food bank, visited Sudan last year. When she returned, she started a campaign on December 4, in affiliation with Christian Solidarity International, a Swiss non-profit organization. Her goal was to raise \$10,000 by May — enough money to buy the freedom of about 130 slaves. On Christmas Eve, the campaign had already raised \$12,000.

Although slavery in Sudan is a remote problem for most Canadians, the speed with which people have responded, including Elmwood Church which donated campaign headquarters and \$3,000, shows Roy's commitment has been infectious. Rev. Karen Timbers, minister of Elmwood Church, believes the outpouring is "a register of the shock that slavery still exists."

"When it comes to the Third World, we're more and more cutting back," says Roy. "Sometimes, we need something new to come along and really capture our attention again."

In civil war-torn Sudan, Muslims from the north are warring with the resource-rich southerners, who are primarily members of the Dinka tribe. The northern factions raid southern towns, often killing the men who oppose them and capturing the women and children. Although Sudanese slaves cannot work for their freedom, once they are bought and returned to their villages, they are usually safe. The raiders seldom hit the same location twice.

Roy plans to return to Sudan in May. In the meantime, her work echoes the words of Abraham Lincoln: "In giving freedom to the slave, we assure freedom to the free, — honourable alike in what we give and what we preserve." (Source: *The London Free Press*)

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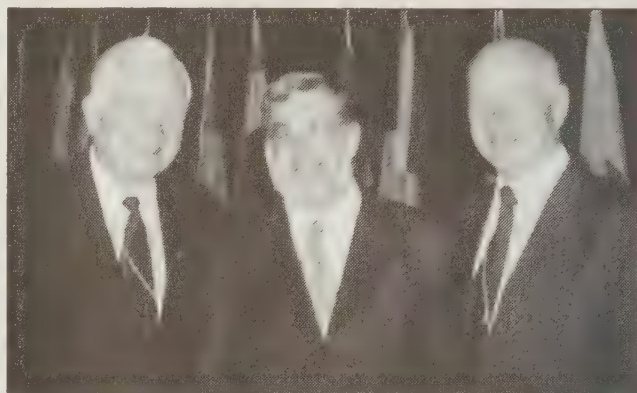
NEWS

Presbyterians strong presence at human rights conference

Presbyterians formed a strong presence at the Universal Rights and Human Values Conference held in Edmonton November 26-28, 1998.

Pictured at the reception and banquet held November 27 are (from left): Hon. Rev. Walter McLean, convener of the Celebrate Steering Committee; Rev. Lloyd Fourney, minister of First Church, Edmonton, and a member of the International Affairs Committee; Les Young, an elder at Westmount Church, Edmonton, and Presbyterian World Service and Development delegate to the conference. Keynote

speakers included Desmond Tutu, Archbishop Emeritus of Cape Town, South Africa; United Nations High Commis-



sioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson; and Chief Justice Antonio Lamer of The Supreme Court of Canada.

News Scan

Vancouver Koreans celebrate first missionaries

The Korean Community in Vancouver held a celebration November 8 to mark the 100th anniversary of the arrival of five Canadian Presbyterian missionaries in South Korea. "We wanted to honour the Canadian missionaries' contribution to our country," said event organizer Rev. Alfred Lee of Ahreumdawoon (Beautiful) Presbyterian Church. Organizers also sponsored a lecture by Dr. Young-Sik Yoo, professor of religious studies at the University of Toronto, in conjunction with the Vancouver School of Theology. Contributions went to the Canadian Foodgrains Bank for famine relief in North Korea. A plaque was presented to the Vancouver School of Theology in memory of the early missionaries by the Han Ca, Western Korean Presbytery. (Source: *BC Christian News*)

Tyndale-St. George's appoints new director

The board of Tyndale-St. George's Community Centre, a Montreal inner-city outreach ministry of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and the Anglican Church of Canada, has announced the

appointment of K. Eugene Wright as executive director. Wright has been associated with Tyndale-St. George's for many years. He has served on its board since 1991 and was chair from 1993 to 1998. A former marketing executive specializing in government contracting and financial management, Wright is also a licensed preacher and teacher in the Anglican Church. Since 1927, Tyndale-St. George's has worked in close partnership with the community, educational institutions, government and business to address the issue of poverty in our society.

CBC Newsworld hopes to bridge the moral divide

CBC Newsworld, in collaboration with Vision TV, has launched an innovative new program called *Moral Divide*. Hosted by Anne Petrie, *Moral Divide* reflects the growing role that spirituality is playing in Canadian society by looking at the religious, spiritual and moral issues that lie behind the daily news stories and events covered by CBC Newsworld. The program began January 17 on CBC Newsworld and January 20 on Vision TV.

Other News

Poll suggests Taiwanese strongly opposed to mainland rule

China has warned Taiwan that it is "playing with fire" after a referendum, supported by the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT), firmly rejected the reunification of the two countries.

"Attempts to block reunification and create 'an independent Taiwan' are a dangerous act of playing with fire," Beijing officials dealing with the Taiwan issue told *Xinhua* news agency on December 9.

The referendum was the first poll of the Taiwanese public's view on the island's future. It was held in Tainan, Taiwan's fourth-largest city with about 700,000 residents. Only nine per cent of voters in the city believe mainland China should govern the island. An overwhelming majority of those polled — 77 per cent — reject the idea.

However, despite support for the referendum from the PCT, Taiwan's most influential Protestant church, turnout for the vote was low — only 25 per cent of eligible voters took part. This was partly due to the generally low interest in polls in Tainan, and to a dispute between referendum workers and Tainan's mayor.

The PCT, which has long been a strong supporter of Taiwanese independence, also succeeded in raising public awareness on the matter by issuing a statement after U.S. President Bill Clinton's China visit, declaring that the island's future should be decided by the Taiwanese people alone. *Taiwan Church News*, a PCT publication, led a petition drive on the issue. (ENI)

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NEWS

Former PWS&D worker finds new work is for the birds

Wayne Bezner Kerr, a former resource and communications coordinator with Presbyterian World Service and Development, has been spending his time lately communicating with a different species — trumpeter swans.

they are descendants of waterfowl bred in captivity, they have no one to teach them how to migrate. That's where Bezner Kerr came in.

Fortunately, he was no stranger to flying with waterfowl, having been credited



Wayne Bezner Kerr and his fine-feathered friends enjoy a water break during a training session.

On December 4, Wayne, in his ultra-light aircraft, and his wife, Rachel, on the ground in a more conventional vehicle, began an amazing journey from Sudbury, Ontario, to the Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge in Indiana with four swans in tow. Some 1,500 kilometres, one province, four states and 19 days later, the swans landed safely in southern Indiana.

The trumpeter swan had vanished east of the Rocky Mountains by the 1930s, but it was not until 1982 that the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources began its restoration project. There are now 191 wild trumpeters in the province. Because

as "goose wrangler" for the movie *Fly Away Home*. However, lacking the downy warmth of his flying companions, Bezner Kerr wore a flying suit, Balaclava, helmet and battery-operated socks.

Wayne and Rachel Bezner Kerr served as International Ministries volunteers in Guatemala from 1994-95. Rachel also received a grant from International Ministries to support her work with the Livingstonia Synod of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian in 1997 to complete her masters degree in Land Resource Sciences and International Development Studies. (Source: *The Globe and Mail*)

Jesus Christ exhibition planned to mark millennium

A major international exhibition is being planned to mark the millennium. The exhibition, called *Anno Domini: Jesus Through the Centuries*, will open at The Provincial Museum of Alberta in the fall of 2000. It will be hosted by several museums in Canada, the United States and Europe during 2000 and 2001.

The exhibition will draw on collections of original artistic works and artifacts from many countries in an effort to discover what different cultural epochs brought to their portrayals of Jesus. It will also try to consider the implications for human culture of the


ways Jesus and his gospel came to be understood.

The basis for the exhibition is Jaroslav Pelikan's book *Jesus Through the Centuries: His Place in the History of Culture*. Pelikan is the honorary curator for the exhibition and Sterling Professor of History Emeritus at Yale University. David J. Goa, who conceived the exhibition and developed the concept, will also present an additional set of themes that reflect the distinctive images of Jesus in recent centuries in Asian, Australian and African cultures, as well as the cultures of the First Peoples of the Americas.



Celebrate.


25 Ways to Celebrate the Millennium

1. Sign a petition supporting Jubilee 2000, an ecumenical initiative of the churches to persuade rich nations to forgive the debt of poor nations. Information available from Stephen Allen in Justice Ministries, 1-800-619-7301, ext. 256.
 2. After you have become knowledgeable regarding the jubilee initiative, take your local member of Parliament to lunch and talk to him or her about the initiative.
 3. Create a local millennium project that incorporates one or more of the aspects involved in jubilee: debt forgiveness, restoration of land, freeing slaves.
 4. Gather a group to meet in your home or church to study the series "Who is Jesus?" which will run in the *Record* from November 1999 to June 2000.
 5. Study kits, *Journeying Toward the Year 2000*, for use in Bible study or prayer groups are also available from the Celebrate office.
 6. Support some young people (ages 15-19) in your congregation to attend "Living Stones," a Canadian Presbyterian Youth Conference at Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario, July 4 to 9, 2000. More information from: Jo Morris, toll-free number 1-877-837-1588.
 7. Celebrate your baptism. Plan a reaffirmation service for your congregation using materials being developed by the Celebrate committee.
 8. Plan and participate in community prayer breakfasts throughout the millennium period.
 9. Twin your congregation or presbytery with an overseas or Canadian partner.
 10. Make a millennium quilt. One idea might be to incorporate in it the six emphases of the FLAMES initiative. Information available from the Life and Mission Agency.
 11. Organize a service to celebrate the confessional nature of our church, highlighting *Living Faith*.
 12. Sign up for an exposure tour either in Canada, planned by the History Committee, or overseas, sponsored by International Ministries.
 13. Take on a special mission project in Canada or overseas. *Something Extra*, available from your minister, lists many possibilities.
 14. Make a banner incorporating some of the millennium and jubilee themes.
 15. Make a time capsule. For the first year of the new millennium, document (with photos, recordings and a written report) the ministry and mission activities of your congregation. Designate a time in the future when it will be opened.
 16. Involve other congregations in your community in some mission project or worship event to celebrate the new millennium.
 17. Initiate an area- or presbytery-wide millennium choir to sing at special events during the millennium period.
 18. Produce some outward sign indicating that your congregation is open and inviting to the community. For example, you might designate a jubilee or millennium door, specially decorated and dedicated, which remains open for a year.
 19. The Synod of Southwestern Ontario is planning a traveling Vacation Bible School. Information from: Bob Geddes, 120 Clarendon Ave., Hamilton, Ont. L9A 3A5. (905) 385-7444.
 20. A church-wide gathering of Presbyterian women is being planned for Louisville, Kentucky, in July 2000. An effort is under way for a Canadian caucus to attend. Information from Barbara McLean in the clerk's office, 1-800-619-7301, ext. 223.
 21. Sponsor a children's poetry or essay contest on the meaning and significance of the millennium.
 22. Commission the writing of a hymn for the millennium.
 23. Make a commitment of support to the aboriginal healing fund (Journey to Wholeness).
 24. Make the year 2000 the year your congregation joins the Every Home Plan of the *Presbyterian Record*.
 25. Organize a Jesus birthday party.
- We have only scratched the surface. We would like to hear what you are doing to celebrate the millennium. Please send us the information so we can share it with the rest of the church. 

Thanks to Andrew Kerr from the Celebrate office who helped to compile this list.

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YOU WERE ASKING?

Tony Plomp



Interim Ministry, Not Interim Ministers

I hear a lot of talk these days about "Interim ministers" but cannot find that office defined anywhere in the Book of Forms. What are the specific duties of an "Interim minister" if such an office exists?

You can't find anything in the Book of Forms about "interim ministers" because there is no such office in our denomination. There are individuals who carry on an interim ministry when, for example, the pulpit is expected to be vacant for a long time. Or, sometimes, after there has been conflict in a congregation, someone with special gifts is called upon to be a reconciling presence before a new minister is called.

Your question is timely in that one of our presbyteries overtured the 124th General Assembly "to clarify the role and the tasks of interim ministers within the church, in order that presbyteries may have clear guidelines for determining when and where it is appropriate to appoint interim ministers within their bounds...."

In many situations, an interim ministry means supplying the pulpit from week to week and taking care of the pastoral needs of the congregation. In some situations, the person appointed to this work may be a layperson or a candidate certified for ordination working under the guidance of the interim moderator and the session. Frequently, an ordained minister, perhaps retired, is called upon to provide steady pulpit supply while the interim moderator and session occupy themselves with the overall administration of the congregation and the search for a new minister.

Then, again, it is possible for the presbytery to appoint an ordained minister as stated supply for one year to carry on an

interim ministry. Here, we are on more certain ground, as indicated by the Book of Forms: "When it is deemed inexpedient to proceed to call, presbytery may appoint a minister of the church as stated supply for a fixed period not exceeding one year" (section 213.1). A minister who is so appointed becomes a member on the constituent roll of presbytery, and his or her stipend is that prevailing within the presbytery.

We have come to refer to those involved in providing this kind of ministry as interim ministers. I think it would be helpful for the church to clarify their role and tasks. Other denominations apparently do have such a category of ministers who are specifically trained to provide the specialized skills often required to assist congregations as they work through unresolved conflict or suffer the grief that sometimes comes after a lengthy pastorate of a beloved minister.

It seems to me to be important that any candidate certified for ordination or any minister who is engaged to provide an interim ministry be excluded (if need be, with written contract) from being a candidate for that pulpit. It is not fair to the search process, and it is using "undue means" to procure a call, if someone who is providing interim ministry suddenly makes himself or herself available for the call, either because the interim minister becomes interested or because members of the congregation like this person so much they see no need to search any further. It is tempting for both parties involved, but should be ruled out from the outset of the appointment of an interim minister. **R**

Please send questions to Rev. Tony Plomp, 4020 Lancelot Dr., Richmond, B.C. V7C 4S3. Include your name and address for information.



The Comfort of Tradition

One of the most religious people I know doesn't believe in God.

I've known Sam for over a year. I always felt a bit of a connection with him because we are different from many university students — we are both fairly open about our beliefs and are comfortable talking about God, religion and faith. He's Jewish, so I enjoy exploring our differences and similarities, and finding out about different traditions.

Sam is a relatively strict Jew, although he doesn't usually wear a yarmulka or follow other orthodox rules. But he does follow kosher laws, fast on fast-days, worship in a synagogue and uphold his family's traditions on holidays or religious festivals. He doesn't swear, tends to date Jewish girls and avoids crude sexual banter or jokes. He's one of the nicest, through-and-through good, most religious people I know.

A couple of months ago, I found out he doesn't believe in God. He's a chemist, and he decided several years ago that God doesn't make sense. The universe can be explained with God out of the picture. I don't know what else prompted this decision. (I have enough trouble reconciling the Holocaust with my image of a loving God, and I'm not even Jewish. I'm awed by the faith of Jewish people who can still believe in God.) Sam simply says he doesn't believe.

This is a problem for me. I can understand rejecting official, organized religion because of its hypocrisy, its ineffectualness, its bureaucracy, its anachronism while continuing to believe in God. I can understand losing one's belief in God and, at the same time, leaving the church. But I have trouble understanding someone who doesn't believe in God yet remains in the church.

I asked Sam about it. He told me about a year he spent working in various places in Israel. A group of teenagers from his area went, and he made friendships that will last a lifetime. It is that community, that sense of belonging, the tradition and heritage, that keep him in his religion, he says, and not belief in an abstract God.

Judaism is legendary for its commitment to tradition, heritage and memory. I don't think Presbyterians have the same sense of community or history. Vague fondness for kilts and bagpipes, maybe, and off-hand gestures of respect and, more frequently, jokes for our severe founders Knox and Calvin. But I bet there are people in our church who, deep down, don't really believe in God but stay because of the fellowship. The friendships they have built in their congregation. The familiarity of old hymns, liturgies and prayers. The comfort of tradition.

And, sometimes, I have trouble with that idea. Isn't part of the definition of being Presbyterian, Christian, a belief in God? How can people who don't believe still consider themselves part of this community? Or do they feel guilty (following another time-honoured tradition of Presbyterianism!) and hypocritical for continuing to attend church despite their lack of belief?

But belief comes in many forms. My belief in God and in God's love is intimately tied up with my image of my family. Maybe someone else cannot understand an abstract, distant God but can experience God's love in the church family. Maybe *that* kind of belief —

active love, belonging to a community — is more real, more Christian than over-intellectualized concepts and theories about a divine being.

If that is the case — if traditions and community and familiar rituals *are* God to some people (and, by saying this, I do

not mean they are practising some form of idolatry; simply that God and godliness manifest in many forms) — then it is no wonder they cling so strongly to those traditions and violently reject any proposals for change. In the past, I have often had difficulty understand-

ing individuals who resist the introduction of new hymn-books, for example, or new forms of liturgy or new kinds of music. Music, prayers, hymns and sermons are, for me, all means of approaching God; as such, they are as good as any other way.

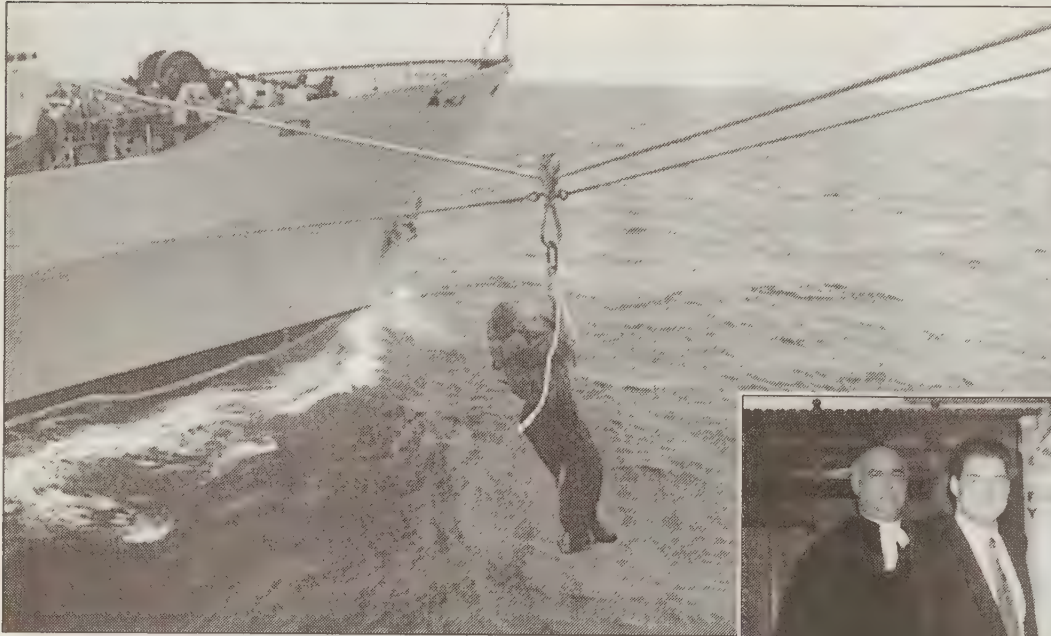
For some people, however, those traditions *are* God. Again, I don't mean to imply some sort of idol-worship, replacing God by empty ritual. More, I mean the ritual is not empty — it provides the same kind of comfort and love other people receive from more abstract images of God. When we introduce change into the traditions of the church, we need to be sensitive to this kind of belief.

For my friend Sam, if you took away the traditions he lives by, he'd have nothing left. ■

For some people, God's comfort and love are found in community and tradition

Kathy Cawsey, a member of Knox Church, Waterloo, Ont., is studying at Oxford University. Write to Kathy at: Middle Common Room, Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, England OX2 6QA; by e-mail at: kathleen.cawsey@lmh.ox.ac.uk.

PEOPLE & PLACES

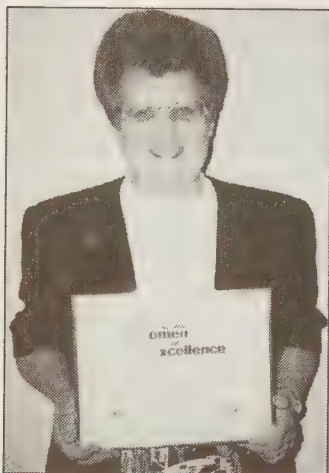


◀ LIEUTENANT AMY CAMPBELL, a (Presbyterian) Protestant chaplain with Canadian Fleet Pacific, is pictured travelling to *HMCS Protecteur* (left) from *HMCS Regina* during her two-month deployment off Hawaii on the multinational RIMPAC 98 exercise. On this transfer, she is travelling by the age-old method known as a jackstay. The rest of her trips between ships were made on Sea King helicopters, better known in this case as the "Holy Helos."

THE CONGREGATION OF Knox Church, Burlington, Ont., held a dinner to honour Rev. James and Margaret Weir on his retirement from the ministry. The Weirs, who served Knox for more than 22 years, are pictured receiving a gift of money from clerk of session Jacqueline Harrington.



▲ A TRIENNIUM '98 BANNER was presented to the congregation of Glenview Church, Toronto, by Jeffery Crawford on Sept. 27 (Triennium Sunday). Jeffery also spoke on the highlights of last year's Triennium. Assisting in the service were Nick Anand (Trien. '98) and Jennifer Brown (Trien. '95). Pictured (L to R) are: Rev. Bob Fourney, Jeffery Crawford, clerk of session Mary Walker and Rev. John Henderson.



◀ PICTURED IS Rev. Betty McLagan with a Women of Excellence award presented to her by the Langley Valley Women's Network in recognition of her support, guidance and contribution toward enriching the lives of others in the Langley, B.C., community.



▲ PICTURED ARE SOME of the 134 children who registered for the Vacation Bible School held at Jubilee Church, Stayner, Ont., last summer. The school's theme was "Passport to the Holy Land."

Please note: Photos submitted for People & Places must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope if they are to be returned. Also, please try to ensure all pictures are clear and do not include a multitude of people. Colour or black-and-white photos are acceptable, but negatives and slides cannot be used. Thank you.

PEOPLE & PLACES

PICTURED ARE MEMBERS OF the junior youth group of the Richmond Bay pastoral charge, Tyne Valley, P.E.I., with the float they entered in the Tyne Valley Oyster Festival Parade. The float's theme was "Guess the Bible Character."



KNOX CHURCH, Stokes Bay, Ont., celebrated 50 years of summer student ministry in 1998. Pictured (L to R) are: Wendy Lampman (student minister 1998), Rev. Douglas Lennox (1958), Rev. Susan Sheridan (1996), interim moderator Rev. Ken Wild, Jonathan Sherbino (1994, 1995).



DEDICATION AND REDEDICATION SERVICES for the buildings of Memorial Church, Sylvan Lake, were held by the Presbytery of Central Alberta last October. Richard Anderson, moderator of presbytery, is pictured administering the ceremonial three knocks on the door of the new north entrance, while deputy clerk of session Cathy Janke stands ready to open the door and hand over the keys. Additions to the church include an elevator and new washroom. The expanded hall and



new kitchen were rededicated as the John and Harla Yoos Fellowship Hall in recognition of the many years of ministry given by former minister Rev. John Yoos and his wife.

PICTURED PRESENTING the 1998 Joyce Smith Memorial Bursary to Joy Nesserth is Rev. Terry Samuels of St. Giles Church, Sarnia, Ont. The \$500 award is presented annually to a post-secondary music student.



ON THE OCCASION of the 35th anniversary of the dedication of the current church building, the congregation of Welland Hungarian Church, Welland, Ont., presented its minister, Rev.

Maria Papp, with a new preaching gown. Making the presentation were elders Joe Mocsan and Mary Nagypal.

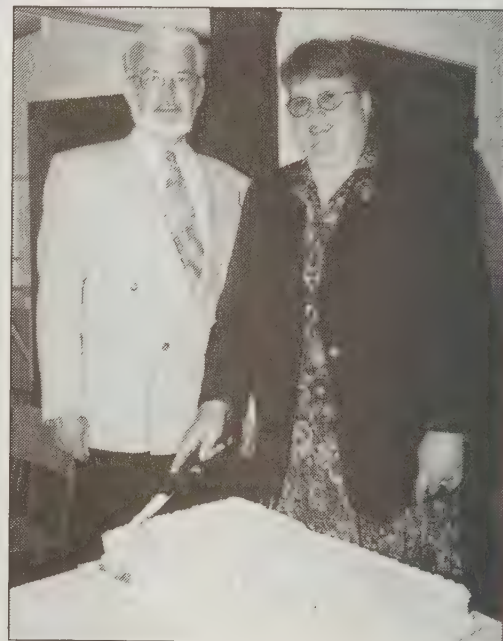
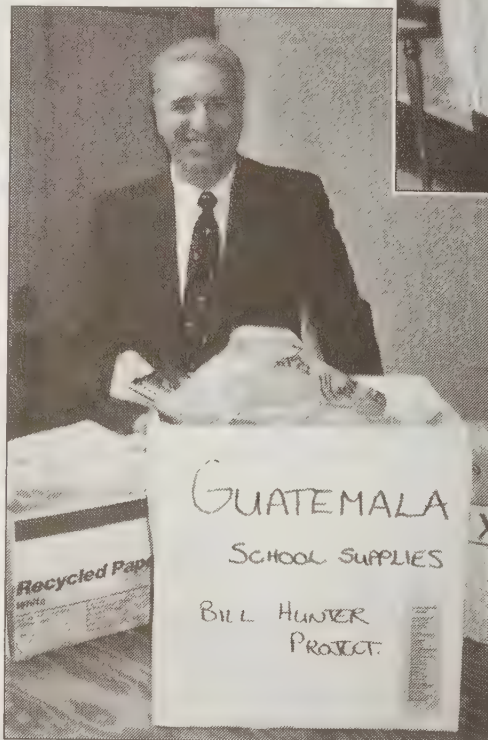


PEOPLE & PLACES

A FORMER HOUSEKEEPER to Lucy Maude Montgomery was among those who participated in the 159th anniversary service of St. Andrew's-Chalmers Church, Uxbridge, Ont. Elsie Davidson, 94, is pictured with: clerk of session David Phillips (far left); guest speaker Rev. John Congram, editor of the *Presbyterian Record*; and Rev. Gordon Hastings (far right), interim minister.



BILL HUNTER of Knox Church, Sundridge, Ont., is pictured with some of the supplies he took on a three-week trip to Guatemala with the organization Missionary Ventures Canada. Bill served as assistant superintendent on a project to build and equip a school. The congregations of St. Andrew's, Burk's Falls, Knox, Magnetawan and Knox, Sundridge, contributed school supplies and financial donations toward materials.



THE CONGREGATION OF St. Andrew's Church, Guelph, Ont., honoured its oldest active member, Anne Ferns, on her 100th birthday with a reception after the morning worship service on Oct. 18. She is pictured with elder John Wynn and Rev. Peter Darch.

THE CONGREGATION OF St. Andrew's Church, Avonmore, Ont., held a farewell luncheon for Rev. Jeffrey and Ruth Anne Smith following their final service on Nov. 1. Jeffrey Smith was the minister of St. Andrew's, Avonmore, and St. James, Gravel Hill, for the past eight years. A framed picture was presented to the Smiths with warm good wishes and appreciation.

THE COMBINED TEENS' CLUB of St. Andrew's Church, Stirling, and St. Andrew's Church, West Huntingdon, Ont., participated in a softball tournament for local teen groups organized by St. Andrew's Church, Roslin, Ont.



PEOPLE & PLACES

A STAINED GLASS WINDOW depicting the baptism of Jesus was dedicated at Blair Church, Garden of Eden, N.S., in memory of Ian Alexander MacDonald. The window, given by Ian's family, was presented by his wife, Margaret, and dedicated by his friend, Rev. Milton Fraser.



THE CONGREGATION OF St. Giles, Kingsway Church, Toronto, held a "Festival of the Reformation Service" recently with Rev. William Klempa, Moderator of the 124th General Assembly, as guest speaker. Young people from the congregation presented special banners designed and created by Karen Colenbrander, community co-ordinator for St Giles, Kingsway. Pictured (L to R) are: Ryan Lawrence, Jennifer Patrick, Jonathan Taylor, Ashleigh Fish and Jillian Redfern.



PICTURED WATCHING Ollie MacAulay (left) and Gwen Shepard turn the sod for an addition to the church hall of Bethel Church, Sydney, N.S., are: (L to R) Ralph Shaw, son of Percy and Katherine Shaw after whom the new room is named; James MacKinnon; Donald Morrison; Rev. Robert Lyle; John A. MacDonald and Duncan MacAulay.



THE CONGREGATION OF Knox Church, Belgrave, Ont., recently held a dedication service for the refurbished sanctuary, and a cross donated by Alice and Garner Nicholson. Pictured (L to R) are: Rev. Cathrine Campbell; Robert Marshal, contractor; Garner and Alice Nicholson; Joyce Stephens, soloist; Hazel Delrymple, organist.

ALTHOUGH THE GAME was bridge, the congregation of St. Andrew's Church, Sarnia, Ont., had a full house on hand for its "Annual Lunch and Bridge" event, held last fall.



From Our Congregations

We do not often review congregational histories in the *Record*. But we suspect the millennium and the 125th anniversary of The Presbyterian Church in Canada will spawn many new congregational histories in the next two years. Either of two recent publications would serve as an excellent model.

The first, *The Changing Scene*, contains the 150-year history of Knox Church in Agincourt, Ontario. Along with lots of photographs and some original documents, what makes this history live are the personal quotes and anecdotes strewn throughout its 145 pages. It is available for \$25 by contacting the church.

The other history comes from one of our younger congregations, Varsity Acres in Calgary. *Life and Joy's* 265 pages are, as Gordon Legge of the Calgary *Herald* describes, "chock-full of photos and graphs, whimsy and wisdom." It contains an exhaustive index and a list of the 2,364 people who have been a part of the Varsity Acres family over its 30 years of existence. It is available for \$24.95 through the congregation.

Food Worth Waiting For is, as you have already guessed, a cookbook. The women from Glenview Presbyterian Church in Toronto have produced a book of passed-down-through-generations recipes. The book, so the church claims, is "filled with wonderful recipes, helpful hints and great graphics." However, I have been assured that, if you are looking for diet food, you should look elsewhere. As a former interim moderator of the congregation, I can confirm that the congregation looks healthy and likes to eat. Available at the bargain price of \$12 (plus \$2 postage and handling) from Glenview Presbyterian Church, 1 Glenview Ave., Toronto, Ont. M4R 1P5.

Why Christianity Must Change or Die by John Shelby Spong (*Harper-Collins, 1998, \$18*). Reviewed by Ian S. Wishart.

Bishop Spong is a controversial character. A newspaper in Scotland called him "the most radical bishop in the world." Some of his critics have called him an atheist. In this book, he attempts to present his faith in non-theistic language. He objects to the depiction of God as "an external, personal, supernatural and potentially invasive being." Instead, he affirms God as "a transcending reality present in the very heart of life."

This bishop delights in his "shocking" reputation. It sells his books and makes him a darling of the press. To sustain his image, he makes a series of distasteful comments. He insults those who disagree with him. He belittles the tradition of Christian theology, and suggests that Jesus, in teaching the Lord's Prayer, simply repeated concepts that modern humanity has outgrown.

Underneath the show is a serious attempt to recast the Christian message in modern terms. "Human language is so inadequate," Spong says. All it can do is describe human experience; but the God who is the source of life constantly breaks into human experience.

Some of the passages in the book are eloquent. His comments on prayer, particularly those relating to the time when his wife suffered from cancer, are moving and instructive. But his theology breaks down in his discussion of ethics. When we look for ethical principles in "the depths of our own being," we end up with whatever behaviour suits ourselves. It cannot protect us from a Hitler or a Clifford Olson or even a Gillian Guess.

Bishop Spong is not my cup of tea. On the issues of fundamentalism, I prefer James Barr. As a recaster of theology in a modern mode, I think he is inferior to

Schleiermacher. If you want to read Tillichian theology, read Tillich. However, it is Spong's books you will find in bookstores.

Ian Wishart, a retired minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, lives in St. John's.

Prayer: The Hidden Fire by Tom Harpur (*Northstone, 1998, \$24.95*). Reviewed by Bert Vancook.

The Worshipbook, published by the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in 1970, has a section of prayers written for use in worship. The section ends brilliantly with this prayer: "Almighty God: you have no patience with solemn assemblies, or heaped-up prayers to be heard by men. Forgive those who have written prayers for congregations. Remind them that their foolish words will pass away, but that your word will last and be fulfilled." These words came to mind as I was reading *Prayer: The Hidden Fire*.

Tom Harpur's skill lies in discovering and popularizing other people's spiritual journeys. He usually intertwines them with his own quest for God. And he uses his scepticism, even his cynicism, to have some fun. This book is different in tone, though. It comes across as the effort of a serious teacher.

For the first time as an author, Harpur has rambled and included too much. He answers his own questions about prayer and responds to other people's questions and insights. He makes good connections with the practice of prayer in other world religions and reminds us of his interest in healing. Because he is a teacher, he includes short, helpful homework assignments at the end of each chapter. But aside from the occasional phrase or thought that excites — "There are times when you feel as though you would burst if there [were] nobody (Nobody!) there to thank" — or the chapter of personal

prayers which are beautifully conceived and written, it feels as though Harpur is too solemn about his subject. Maybe he would have been better off writing a diary of private prayer.

Hmmm. Too much rambling around, with occasional exciting insights? Sounds an awful lot like the act of praying, doesn't it?

Bert Vancook is the minister of St. Andrew's Church in Thunder Bay, Ont.

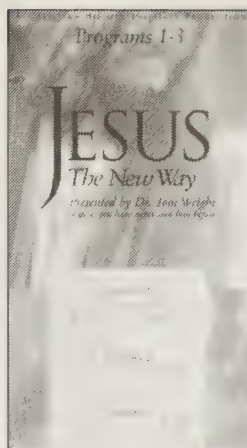
Video

Jesus: The New Way, presented by Tom Wright, six-part video series, Gateway Films/Vision Video. Reviewed by Clyde Ervine.

I highly recommend the video series *JESUS: The New Way*, hosted by Tom Wright, dean of Lichfield Cathedral, England, and eminent New Testament scholar. Six half-hour videos, along with

program scripts, teacher's guide and student worksheets, present an enthralling interpretation of Jesus' ministry. Much of the action is dramatized, but this plays a secondary role to the message of the biblical texts and the commentary by Wright.

Developed, I believe, with a North American audience in mind, the series corrects the often individualistic and pietistic picture we have drawn of Jesus, and presents Jesus as the fulfillment of the whole of Israel's story. It is a portrayal that refuses to choose between the politics and theology of Israel and Jesus. Wright uses the political language of "kingdom," "liberation," "revolution" but carefully investigates the way in which Jesus reinterpreted these key ideas within the Jewish politics of his day. Insisting that we learn to read the Gospel



texts and, therefore, the ministry of Jesus within a Jewish world-view, Wright brings a fresh angle of thought to what might otherwise seem familiar territory.

This is an excellent adult study course over six weeks or, even better, over 12. A thought-provoking and spiritually stimulating resource.

This video series may be rented from The Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1-800-619-7301.

Clyde Ervine is the minister of St. Giles, Kingsway Church, Etobicoke, Ont.

Most books reviewed may be purchased through The Book Room, 50 Wynford Dr., North York, Ont. M3C 1J7. Do not send payment with order. An invoice will follow. Please include name and location of congregation. Toll-free order line: 1-800-619-7301, ext. 301.

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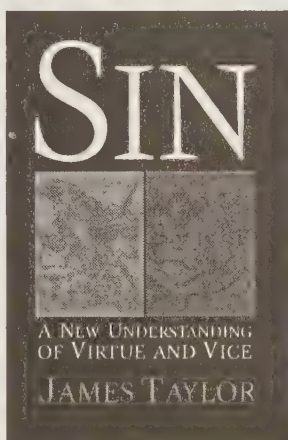
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Dates and Times:

Wednesday, March 3	4 p.m. - 8 p.m.
Thursday, March 4	9 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Friday, March 5	9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

We're looking forward to seeing you!

GREETINGS and THANKSGIVING from Beth and Jack McIntosh

We wish to express in this way our joyful greetings and thankful hopes to friends and strangers, families and congregations who have been such special partners last year. Our grandson Kai John Micah Kuypers-McIntosh was safely born in Vancouver on Nov. 28, brother to Keilen, 4, and cousin to Kento, 8, in Osaka. Grandma was in attendance for the joyful home birth. Jack's journey through heart and other internal medical procedures in November and December ended plans for a grand family Christmas in Vancouver, and has delayed our return to Japan until February — all as God proposes, provides and fulfils. As we journey on, we wish you joy and blessings which we may share the next time we come together. With you, we are sure of the way, straight and narrow, that is Jesus Christ alone, our journey's end. In him, peace and love to you and yours. (Our personal reports of the whole year are available from International Ministries.)

DEATHS

- BAKER, ESTELLA, 101, lifelong member of Ladies Aid, WMS and Alberton Presbyterian Church, Alberton, Ont., Nov. 26.
- BRODIE, JACKIE, a faithful member, an elder, treasurer and also served on the board of Knox, Gamebridge, Ont., Nov. 1; she was a great visitor who will be greatly missed by church and community.
- CAMERON, CLIFFORD ARDEN, 92, elder, board of managers over 40 years, St. Andrew's, Huntingdon, Que., Dec. 2; survived by wife, Helen, Williamsburg, Ont., sons Tom and Gary, Australia.
- CROSS, WILLIAM B., founding elder of St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Nobleton, Ont., where he served as clerk of session for 38 years; he was ordained an elder on June 6, 1937, at Dufferin Presbyterian Church; co-founder of Presbyterian Men in Canada; died peacefully on Sunday, Nov. 15, in his 87th year.
- DONOVAN, ANNA GAYE (née COLLINS), 68, WMS life member; wife of Rev. Walter; mother of Rev. Lynne (Phillip Norton), Kerry, Andrew and Anna-Marie (David Black); she is fondly remembered also by congregations and communities of

- Mistawasis, Waywayseecappo, Shoal Lake, Ont.; Keeseekoowenin-Elphinstone, Swift Current, Kipling, North Battleford and Saskatoon, Nov. 5.
- HOY, ALEX, 63, lifetime member, Avonton Church, Avonton, Ont., Nov. 3.
- MACDONALD, FRASER, 78, formerly of Union Church; member, St. Andrew's, Brampton, Ont., Oct. 6.
- MATTHISON, JOHN MURRAY "JACK," 74, active faithful member, elder 28 years, Avonton Church, Avonton, Ont., Oct. 21.
- REID, ROBERT "BOB" FRASER, 83, longtime member of Kerrisdale Presbyterian Church, Vancouver; session clerk, roll clerk, assessor elder, Vancouver Taiwanese Presbyterian Church; board of Dunwood Place, Oct. 28.
- SHEPPARD, AGNES, 81, received into membership March 1931, St. Andrew's, St. Lambert, Que., Dec. 18 in Toronto.
- SMITH, MAUDE, 81, loyal member, Ladies Aid, WMS life member, former Sunday school teacher, Avonton Church, Avonton, Ont., Nov. 5.
- TREANOR, LYDIA, 101, longtime faithful member, life member of the WMS, of St. Andrew's, Streetsville, Ont., on Nov. 6.
- WILHELM, DONALD ALAN, 70, longtime active member, board of managers, taught church school, ordained elder 1964, Weston Church, Weston, Ont., Nov. 20.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES and INTERIM MODERATORS

Synod of the Atlantic Provinces

- Barney's River, N.S., Marshy Hope pastoral charge. Rev. John Cameron, RR 1, Merigomish, N.S. B0K 1G0.
- Halifax, Church of St. David. Rev. P.A. McDonald, 4 Pinehill Rd., Dartmouth, N.S. B3A 2E6.
- Harvey Station, N.B., Knox and Acton. Rev. Philip Lee, 311 Bay Cres. Dr., Saint John, N.B. E2M 6M1.
- Middle River, N.S., Farquharson; Lake Ainslie; Kenloch. Rev. Lloyd Murdock, PO Box 184, Baddeck, N.S. B0E 1B0.
- Miramichi, N.B., St. James. Rev. Mel Fawcett, 395 Murray Ave., Bathurst, N.B. E2A 1T4.
- Moncton, N.B., St. Andrew's. Rev. Andrew Hutchinson, 600 Coverdale Rd., Riverview, N.B. E1B 3K6.
- New Glasgow, N.S., Westminster. Rev. Glenn Cooper, Box 1078, Westville, N.S. B0K 2A0.
- River John, N.S., St. George's; Toney River,

- St. David's. Rev. Kenneth MacLeod, Box 185, New Glasgow, N.S. B2H 5E2.
- St. John's, Nfld., St. Andrew's. Rev. Ted Thompson, 98 Elizabeth Ave., St. John's, Nfld. A1A 4C4.
- Summerside, P.E.I., Summerside Church. Rev. Christine Schulze, Box 32, Tyne Valley, P.E.I. C0B 2C0.

Synod of Quebec and Eastern Ontario

- Almonte, Ont., Almonte Church; Kinburn, St. Andrew's. Rev. Thomas Hay, Box 1073, Almonte, Ont. K0A 1A0.
- Beaconsfield, Que., Briarwood. Rev. Glynis Williams, Action Réfugiés Montreal, 1410 Guy, Montreal, Que. H3H 2L7.
- Beauharnois, Que., St. Edward's; Valleyfield, Valleyfield Church (part-time). Rev. Kate Jordan, 50 Prince, Huntingdon, Que. J0S 1H0.
- Fort-Coulange, Que., St. Andrew's; Bristol, Bristol Memorial. Rev. Ruth Syme, Box 1983, Deep River, Ont. K0J 1P0.
- Ingleside, Ont., St. Matthew's (part-time). Rev. Ian MacMillan, 18220 S. Branch Rd., Cornwall, Ont. K6H 5R6.
- Kars, Ont., St. Andrew's; Vernon, Osgoode. Rev. Gordon E. Williams, 6598 Windsong Ave., Orleans, Ont. K1C 6M9.
- Montreal, Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul. Rev. J.C. McLelland, 121 Alston Rd., Pointe-Claire, Que. H9R 3E2.
- Montreal, Knox, Crescent, Kensington and First. Rev. Richard Topping, 3415 Redpath St., Montreal, Que. H3G 2G2.
- Montreal, Korean. Rev. John Kim, 298 Rudar Rd., Mississauga, Ont. L5A 1S3.
- Montreal, Maisonneuve-St. Cuthbert's. Rev. Coralie Jackson-Bissonnette, 5545 Snowdon Ave., Montreal, Que. H3X 1Y8.
- Ottawa, St. Giles. Rev. Wm. C. MacLellan, 1538 Meadowfield Place, Ottawa, Ont. K1C 5V9.
- Smiths Falls, Ont., Westminster (effective April 30). Rev. Larry Paul, 24 North Street, Perth, Ont. K7H 2S5.

Synod of Toronto and Kingston

- Brampton, St. Andrew's. Rev. Peter Barrow, 38 Edith St., Georgetown, Ont. L7G 3B1.
- Burk's Falls, St. Andrew's; Magnetawan, Knox; Sundridge, Knox. Rev. Freda & Rev. Graham MacDonald, Box 650, Burk's Falls, Ont. P0A 1C0.
- Cambridge, Knox's Galt. Rev. Kevin Livingston, St. Andrew's Hespeler Church, 73

The Transitions column welcomes announcements of special events such as births, marriages, anniversaries, baptisms and the reception of new members, as well as death notices. The rate is 90 cents per word or \$43 per column inch (the lower amount) plus GST.

All notices of pulpit vacancies, recognitions, ordinations and inductions will be charged to presbyteries: \$10 for the basic notice and 90 cents per word for additional information. (There will be no charge to congregations on the Every Home or Club 50 plans.)

TRANSITIONS

Queen St. E, Cambridge, Ont. N3C 2A9.

Campbellford, St. Andrew's; Burnbrae, St. Andrew's. Rev. Bill Bynum, PO Box 787, Campbellford, ON. K0L 1L0.

Claude, Claude Church. Rev. Gerald Rennie, 67 Churchill Rd. N, Acton, Ont. L7J 2H9.

Collingwood, First (two ministers). Rev. James Kitson, 539 Hugel Ave., Midland, Ont. L4R 1W1.

Englehart, St. Paul's; Tomstown. Rev. Ivan Dambrowitz, 45 Wellington St., New Liskeard, Ont. P0J 1P0; (705) 647-6242.

Hillsdale, St. Andrew's; Craighurst, Knox (half-time). Rev. Tim Purvis, Box 26, Stayner, Ont. L0M 1S0.

Kapuskasing, St. John's. Rev. John Blue, Box 283, Timmins, Ont. P4N 7E2.

King City, St. Andrew's. Rev. Daniel D. Scott, 107 Compton Cres., Bradford, Ont. L3Z 2X7.

Mississauga, Glenbrook. Rev. Ian MacPherson, 1560 Dundas St. W, Mississauga, Ont. L5C 1E5.

Mount Forest, St. Andrew's; Conn, Knox. Rev. Hans W. Zegerius, 125 Mountford Dr., Guelph, Ont. N1E 4G2.

North Bay, Calvin. Rev. Freda & Rev. Graham MacDonald, Box 650, Burk's Falls, Ont. P0A 1C0.

Oakville, Knox Sixteen. Rev. E.R. Fenton, 375 Christina Dr., Oakville, Ont. L6K 1H5.

Perry Sound, St. Andrew's. Rev. Raye Brown, 1 High St., Huntsville, Ont. P1H 1P2.

Scarborough, Fallingbrook. Rev. Glen & Rev. Joyce Davis, 4156 Sheppard Ave. E, Agincourt, Ont. M1S 1T4.

Scarborough, St. John's, Milliken. Rev. Gerard Bylaard, 3817 Lawrence Ave. E, Toronto, Ont. M1G 1R2.

South Monaghan, Centreville (renewable term, presbytery appointment). Rev. Ken MacRae, 785 Park St. S, Peterborough, Ont. K9J 3T6.

Sudbury, Calvin. Rev. Freda MacDonald, Box 650, Burk's Falls, Ont. P0A 1C0.

Toronto, Beaches. Rev. Jean Armstrong, 662 Pape Ave., Toronto, Ont. M4K 3S5.

Toronto, East Toronto Korean (assistant minister). Rev. Peter Han, 40 Yarmouth Rd., Toronto, Ont. M6G 1W8.

Toronto, Leaside. Rev. Art Van Seters, 59 St. George St., Toronto, Ont. M5S 2E6.

Toronto, Victoria-Royce. Rev. Jim Cuthbertson, 250 Dunn Ave., Toronto, Ont. M6K 2R9.

Synod of Southwestern Ontario

Ailsa Craig, Ailsa Craig Church. Rev. John Bannerman, 342 Pond Mills Rd., London, Ont. N5Z 3X5; (519) 681-7242.

Blenheim, Blenheim Church (half-time). Rev. Evelyn Carpenter, 60 Fifth St., Chatham, Ont. N7M 4V7.

Burlington, Knox, Rev. David McInnis, 179 Cornwallis Rd., Ancaster, Ont. L9G 4H2.

Chatsworth, St. Andrew's; Dornoch, Latona. Rev. John Hogerwaard, PO Box 323, Dundalk, Ont. N0C 1B0.

Chesley, Geneva. Rev. Bruce Clendening,

Box 757, Wiarton, Ont. N0H 2T0.

Crinan, Argyle; Largie, Duff's. Rev. Jennifer Cameron, RR 2, Glencoe, Ont. N0L 1M0.

Durham, Durham Church. Rev. John Vaudry, Box 115, Wingham, Ont. N0G 2W0.

Fingall, Knox; Port Stanley, St. John's. Rev. Gloria Langlois, Box 39, Belmont, Ont. N0L 1B0.

Glencoe, Glencoe Church; Wardsville, St. John's. Rev. Kathryn Strachan, PO Box 72, Appin, Ont. N0L 1A0.

Kintyre, Knox; New Glasgow, Knox; Rodney, St. John's. Rev. Mark Gedcke, 450 Regal Dr., London, Ont. N5Y 1J9.

Komoka; North Caradoc; Mount Brydges, St. Andrew's. Rev. Dennis Carrothers, 901-700 Wonderland Rd. N, London, Ont. N6H 4V3.

Niagara Falls, Stamford. Rev. Martin Wehrmann, c/o 515 Scott St., St. Catharines, Ont. L2M 3X3.

North Pelham, First; Rockway. Rev. Elizabeth S. Kidnew, 30 Brookbank Cres., Fonthill, Ont. L0S 1E0.

Owen Sound, St. Andrew's (associate minister of Christian development). Rev. Ted Nelson, c/o 865 2nd Ave. W, Owen Sound, Ont. N4K 4M6.

Priceville, St. Andrew's (half-time). Rev. Alice Wilson, PO Box 20004, Midtown PO, Hanover, Ont. N4N 3T1.

St. Thomas, Knox. Rev. Terry Ingram, 862 Freele St., London, Ont. N6H 3P3.

Stoney Creek, Heritage Green. Rev. Alan McPherson, 165 Charlton Ave. W, Hamilton, Ont. L8P 2C8.

Teeswater, Knox; Kinlough, Kinlough Church. Rev. Paul Chambers, Box 208, Ripley, Ont. N0G 2R0.

Tiverton, Knox. Rev. Ken Wild, Box 404, Southampton, Ont. N0H 2L0.

West Flamborough, West Flamboro Church. Rev. Ian McPhee, 19 Pearl St. N, Hamilton, Ont. L8R 2Y6.

Synod of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario

Winnipeg, St. Andrew's (part-time). Rev. Henry Hildebrandt, Box 447, Kenora, Ont. P9N 3X4.

Synod of Saskatchewan

Biggar, St. Andrew's. Rev. M.E. Marsh, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Box 621, Biggar, Sask. S0K 0M0.

Regina, Norman Kennedy. Rev. Deborah Lannon, 2170 Albert St., Regina, Sask. S4P 2T9.

Synod of British Columbia

Vancouver, Vancouver Korean (bilingual youth minister). Elder S.D. Sohn, 205 West 10th Ave., Vancouver, B.C. V5Y 1R9.

Vancouver, West Point Grey. Rev. Richard Sand, 2733 West 41st Ave., Vancouver, B.C. V6N 3C5.

White Rock, St. John's (full-time assistant minister). Rev. J.W. Mills, 6341 Holly Park Dr., Delta, B.C. V4K 4T2.

Thornhill Presbyterian Church

will be celebrating its

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www.presbycan.ca/record

A Child's Way

Written by
Karen Timbers

A page to share with the children you love

GOD USES OUR GIFTS

Sing the following song to the tune "Away in a Manger."

God Uses Our Gifts

David was a shepherd and he cared for his sheep —
With his crook, he would guide them to safety and sleep.
If a wolf came to harm them, he would scare it away.
He watched them each moment; there was no time to play.

He loved to write poetry and to sing with his harp,
And practise his slingshot — his aim grew quite sharp.
He heard about Goliath who was threatening to kill
The Israelite people, 'lest they fought on a hill.

David decided he would take careful aim;
With God's help, he challenged the great giant's claim.
With one shot to the forehead, the mighty giant fell.
David's talent saved his people and their fear was dispelled.

I can use the gifts that God has given to me
To help other people and to set their hearts free.
God wants me to love others and to share all my gifts —
To be faithful and caring, their hearts to uplift.

- Write a poem about someone you love who helps you.
- Write a poem about yourself to the tune "Away in a Manger."

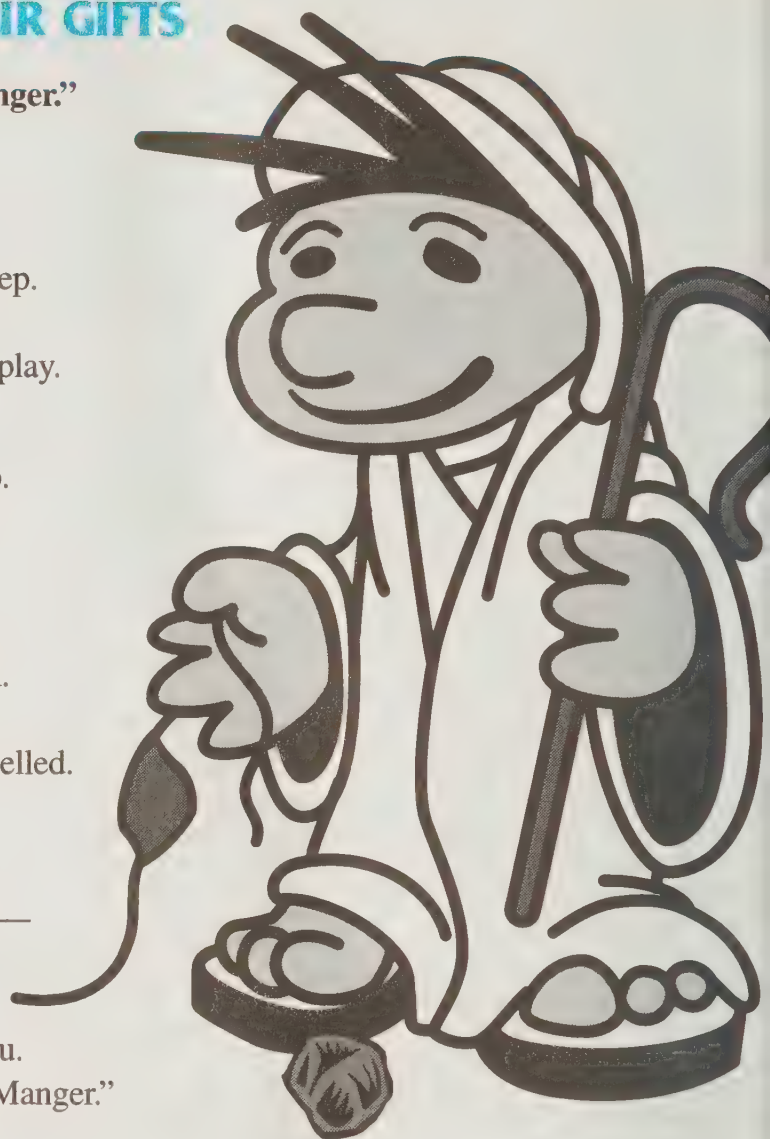
Questions to Consider

1. David was talented in using his slingshot, playing a harp, being a shepherd and writing poetry.
What talents do you have?
2. How could you share your talents with other people?
3. What talents do special people in your life share with you to help you?

Prayer

Dear God,

Help me to share with others the gifts you have given to me. Amen.



A note to adults reading this page:

God gives us talents not only for our personal enjoyment but also to share with others. The children in your life may play the piano or sing. Encourage them to share their abilities with people outside the family. They could visit a senior or a neighbour to offer their talents.

Rev. Karen Timbers is the
minister of Elmwood Avenue
Church, London, Ont.

Warm Thoughts for a Cold Night

Tom Denton

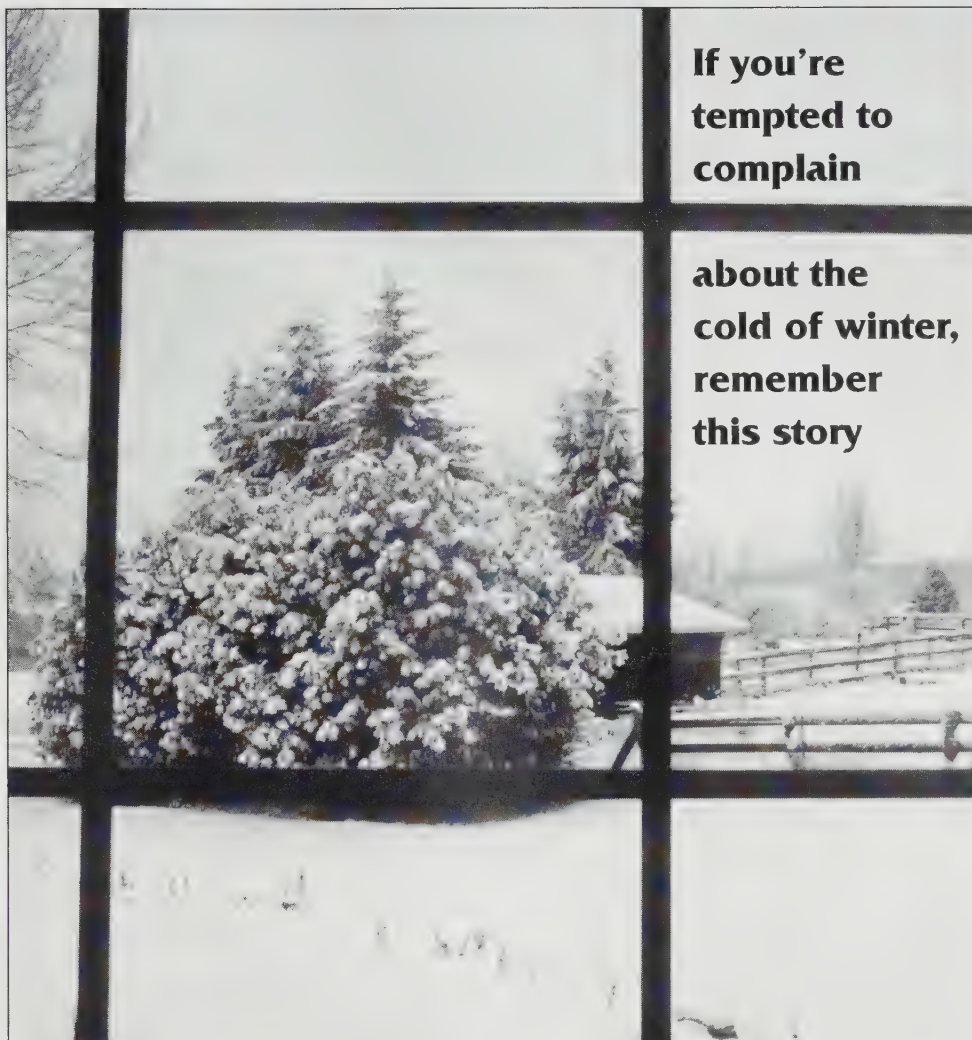
It was a hot night in Winnipeg's Crowne Plaza hotel. The chill in the October air outside was a foretaste of winter; but, inside, in the hotel's ballroom, the deafening beat of African rhythms on traditional drums and the body-shaking frenzy of the colourful performers danced away any thought of sub-zero temperatures ahead.

The dinner had hinted at the cuisine of the central African country whose national day we celebrated but it was adapted to Canadian realities of what was available. Speeches had been few and mercifully short. Then, the community treated its guests to remembered folk customs from half a world away. The solidarity of Winnipeg's African community was reflected in representation from many countries such as Zimbabwe, Kenya, Malawi and Sierra Leone.

The woman's traditional African dress accentuated the elegance and dignity of her bearing. Her carriage and fine features suggested her origins in the heart of the continent. A mutual friend introduced us, and she sat down beside me as the stage entertainment subsided and guests made their way to the dance floor.

She had come here two years earlier, a single mother with five children ages four to 15. Her husband, a bishop of the church, had been murdered in the 1994 nightmare that was Rwanda. Her good fortune was to have been visiting her parents, with her children, in a neighbouring country when hell erupted back home. There followed two years in refugee circumstances in Nairobi before kind providence and the Canadian government selected her and the children to resettle in Canada.

Now, here she was, quietly telling her story to a probing stranger. Her smile seemed tired and tinged with sadness. Her English was halting for, after all, it



**If you're
tempted to
complain**

**about the
cold of winter,
remember
this story**

was recently learned — her fourth language. Yes, the children were now doing well in school, the youngest in Grade 1 and the oldest finishing high school. She was in the second year of a Bachelor of Social Work program at the university. This was a courageous, strong and determined mother making a new life for herself and her children in a strange land.

"It hasn't been easy," I offered sympathetically.

Her oblique response to my banal comment gave my evening its high point, an unexpected sermon.

"That first winter was very cold," she said smiling. "People often asked me if I

minded it." Indeed, the winter of '96-'97 had been one of the worst on record in Manitoba.

Then, she delivered the punch line, smack into my gut: "But whenever I waited for my bus to go to classes and I felt cold, *I thanked God for the cold — because I knew I was in Canada.*"

Whenever I'm tempted to complain about the cold of a Canadian winter again, I shall remember her quiet response, and remember where I am — in Canada. Thanks be to God. **R**

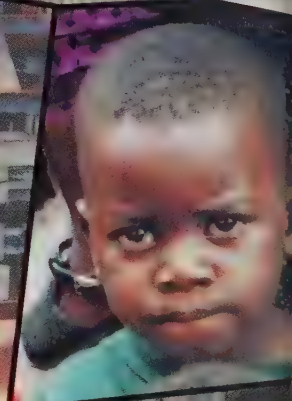
Tom Denton is a member of First Church in Winnipeg.

Because God's love
has been poured
into our hearts,
we are sent . . .



TO SPEAK

We talk with others about the
good news — about the faith, hope
and love that we know through Jesus Christ.



TO SERVE

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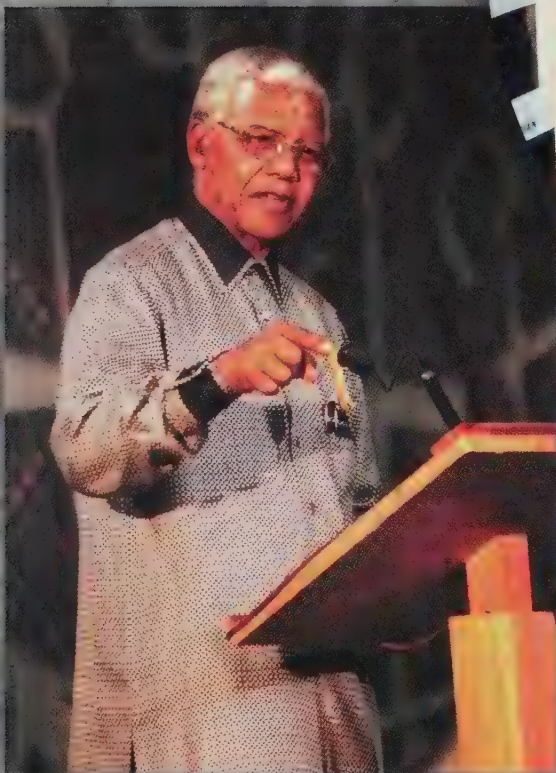
TO SHARE

We give our gifts to help others.
By doing so, we are often enriched ourselves.

PRESBYTERIAN Record

March 1999

**Turn to God –
Rejoice in
Hope”**



**World
Council of
Churches
meets in
Harare,
Zimbabwe**

p.14



Qualified to Lead?

Moses wasn't qualified to lead God's people out of Egypt. He spoke with a stutter. He was reluctant and unwilling and he couldn't control his temper.... In a very real sense not one of us is qualified, but it seems that God continually chooses the most unqualified to do His work.... If we are qualified, we tend to think that we have done the job ourselves. If we are forced to accept our evident lack of qualification, then there's no danger that we will confuse God's work with our own.

— Madeleine L'Engle
in *Glimpses of Grace*



Haggishounds Roam the Internet Seeking Homes

A Highland parish kirk is set to benefit from a barking-mad way to raise funds. Duncan Gillespie, of Newtonmore, has invented a new name for an old type of dog — the mongrel — and is now selling certificates of stock so pooches of uncertain or lowly origin can revel in the title of Newtonmore Haggishound. All proceeds go to St. Bride's Parish Church, whose minister is Gillespie's wife, Irene. She is also owner of lurcher Nell, whom Gillespie has named the founder of the breed. He hit on the idea for the Newtonmore Haggishound when they got Nell from a pet rescue centre.

— Dawn Thompson

Fulfilling Our Potential and Our Promise

In spite of turbulent times and government restraint, it is not too much to hope that we can make substantial progress in improving the well-being of children and families. Our knowledge of what is possible must be matched by a will to make it a reality. Investing in children is the mark of a compassionate society. It is also enlightened self-interest since today's children are Canada's intellectual, economic and social future.

— John Evans, chairman of Torstar Corporation,
in *Our Promise to Children*

Do You Want to Grow?

According to a recent study by the Church Growth Strategy Team, 90 per cent of the people outside the church want to be invited to church; but the church doesn't want to invite them. If a church doesn't want to grow, there's not much that can be done about it.

— Robert Bulloch Jr.
in *The Presbyterian Outlook*

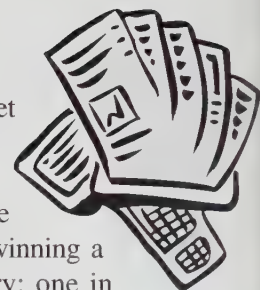
Grant, O God, that we may always be right, for Thou knowest that we will never change our minds.

— alleged to be an old
Scottish prayer, from the
book *Prayers and Graces*
collected by Allen M. Laing

Odds

Odds a lottery ticket buyer will die from flesh-eating bacteria: one in one million. Odds of winning a government lottery: one in 15 million.

— from *Servant* magazine



Don't mistake the calling to preach with the canonization of personal opinion.

— from *Best Advice for Preaching*
edited by John S. McClure

The New Millennium

As I look toward the approaching dawn of the new millennium ... having been trained in the multidisciplinary pedagogy of religious studies, I feel confident in saying that we, the denizens of the late 20th century, are sitting on a rich, fermenting compost heap of religious traditions that will continue to sprout new, exotic seeds.

— Susan Palmer

Easter is
God's way
of looking at
Good Friday.

— James
Simpson

Slovenian Proverb

Speak the truth,
but leave
immediately
after.

Change

Q: How many Presbyterians does it take to change a light bulb?

A: Change? What do you mean, change? We've always had those light bulbs!

— Don Maddox





Drawing Straight Lines and Houses That Look Like Houses

From almost as long as I can remember, I disliked art in school. Part of the problem was my difficulty with obeying the rules. I always had trouble colouring inside the lines, even when I tried. However, I lay some of the blame for my condition at the feet of my Grade 6 teacher.

One beautiful spring day, he took us outside to sit on the school lawn and draw one of the houses across the street. The teacher moved among us as we worked. I prayed he wouldn't stop to examine what I had produced. No luck. He paused beside me. Looking at my partially finished drawing, he announced in a disdainful voice the whole class could hear, "Congram, I don't think you could draw a straight line with a ruler."

He was right, of course. But, from then on, I avoided art as much as I could. As soon as art was no longer compulsory, I dropped it altogether. I have since learned that art is more than drawing straight lines or houses that actually look like houses. At least, my head tells me that. But a small, persistent voice inside my psyche keeps repeating, I cannot succeed where art is involved. I am no good.

A lot of Presbyterians believe the same things about their religion as my art teacher believed about drawing houses that look like houses. If it does not appear in the Book of Forms or the Acts and Proceedings, it can't be real. They know how a minister or elder or theologian should look and act. And when he or she fails to measure up to their image, they are quick to inform the whole world. They long for the return to the time when drawing consisted of straight lines and houses that looked like houses.

My grandfather helped to build the "famous" Wingham car, a proposed new industry early in the century for the town that, in the end, produced only one car. It was with interest, therefore, that I heard a story about Henry Ford. Early in his career, he toured southern Ontario in an attempt to raise money for his new enterprise of making automobiles. He approached a wealthy citizen of my home town. They sat together on a porch during a warm summer afternoon and discussed the idea. After

due consideration, the wealthy man refused to give Ford any money. He said he simply did not believe the scheme would work. And, besides, all Ford was trying to do was replace the horse. Today, we know a car may not look like a horse but it is a darn sight handier.

A lot of Presbyterians believe the same things about their religion as my art teacher believed about drawing houses that look like houses

An even bigger problem for our faith consists of a history with people who didn't draw houses that looked like houses or build cars that looked like horses — Moses and Ruth, Jeremiah and Mary. St. Paul should have known that the house of God would never again look like the house of God if he invited and encouraged Gentiles to come in. These people simply messed up all the nice straight lines.

Perhaps, God is the biggest offender of all in this regard. Easter morning did not look like anything anyone had ever seen before, or since, for that matter. No wonder the disciples did not recognize Jesus on the Emmaus Road. Dead people don't come back to life and walk the streets again.

As in art, many of the great moments in our faith and history occur when people don't draw straight lines and when they draw houses that don't look like houses. Unfortunately, my art teacher in Grade 6 never understood that.

John Congram

Volume CXXIII, No. 3

March 1999

ISSN 0032-7573

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Published on the first of each month except
August by The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

The *Presbyterian Record*, national magazine of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, is responsible to the General Assembly. It exists to publish issues relative to Christian faith and a selection of current and timely news analyses and opinions of interest or importance to Presbyterians across Canada.

Member of The Canadian Church Press and
The Associated Church Press.

Publications Mail Registration No. 0264

Postage paid at Mississauga, Ontario.

Return postage guaranteed.

Send label only.

Subscription Rates

Individual: \$15

Every Home Plan (80% families subscribe): \$9

Club 50 Plan (50% families subscribe): \$11

U.S.A. and Foreign: \$20

Single Copies: \$2

All prices include GST.

Acceptance of advertising does not imply endorsement by the *Presbyterian Record* or The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Address all correspondence and changes of address (include label from magazine) to:

Presbyterian Record

50 Wynford Drive

North York, Ontario M3C 1J7

Phone: (416) 441-1111

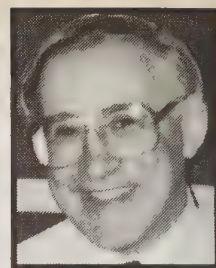
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FROM THE MODERATOR

William
Klempa



Africa, Christian Missions and David Livingstone

The production of eminent examples of Christian life and service, Karl Barth said, is a key form of the Church's ministry to its own members and to the world. Presbyterians may shy away from the Roman Catholic practice of canonization. Yet, if exemplary Christian lives are wanting, the Church's witness is not only impoverished but also lacks substance.

I was reminded of this as my wife, Lois, and I travelled in East Africa. One cannot journey far without encountering the name of David Livingstone and, especially, the influence of his work as a missionary doctor and explorer. Livingstone wrote to his father in 1850: "I am a missionary, heart and soul. God had an only Son, and He was a missionary and a physician. A poor, poor imitation I am or wish to be. In this service I hope to live, in it I wish to die."

The Klempas visit Malawi, Kenya and Zimbabwe

To be sure, Livingstone had his faults. He neglected his family. He was obstinate. And he may have lacked

consideration for his wife and others to fulfil what he believed was his missionary vocation. Yet, he was a truly dedicated and noble Christian. Through his exploits in Africa and his influence on others, Scottish historian George Shepperson said, Livingstone did more than any other person before or since to turn the attention of the world to Africa. Shepperson calls Livingstone "a very great propagandist" (we would prefer "a very great missionary"). He is an outstanding example of missionary service and sacrifice.

The work and witness of Livingstone provides a suitable framework to describe our African trip. I begin with Malawi, for it is there that the Livingstone heritage is most evident.

Malawi

To open up new territory for the entry of "Christianity and commerce" which would cure "the open sore" of slave trading, transform Africa and bring it "into the community of nations," David Livingstone explored Nyasaland (Malawi) from 1858 to 1864. Malawi is located in east-central Africa, bordering on Zambia in the west, Tanzania in the north, and Mozambique in the east. Livingstone envisaged a Scottish settlement in the Shire Highlands south of Lake Malawi. This dream was realized on his death when the Church of Scotland started a mission in 1876, named after Livingstone's birthplace, Blantyre, now Malawi's largest city.

As guests of the Synod of Blantyre, we visited two of seven community-based orphan care homes in Blantyre with Linda Inglis. With one of the highest HIV/AIDS infection rates in the world (one in three urban adult Malawians is HIV-positive), there are 100 new AIDS orphans daily. The Projects Office of the Blantyre Synod, supported by Presbyterian World Service and Development (PWS&D) funds, is doing

Moderator's Itinerary

February 17 - March 15
Western Canada visit

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Our Cover

Photos: (left to right) South Africa President Nelson Mandela speaking to the WCC Assembly, photo by Chris Black/WCC; at the Africa plenary session, photo by Chris Black/WCC; Adele Halliday with Monica, a friend from India, in front of the handprints of those attending the Decade Festival, photo courtesy Adele Halliday.

In the next issue ...

- How should the church respond to Canada's farm crisis?
- Suicide: an intergenerational crisis
- Parish nursing: a new way of doing ministry

Special Gift

Thank you for your editorial "Advent Gift" (December *Record*). I know our church addressed this issue in 1987 when that General Assembly encouraged all sessions to invite baptized children to the Lord's Table. However, your article puts a face on the issue.

I am a mother of three children (ages 9, 10 and 12). I am also a diaconal minister in a congregation considering this issue. In my own family, I have had the experience of our children coming to the Table with us; I have also had the experience of the children being in church school during this special time. I believe children in our churches are special gifts to us and they are part of the church. I have been amazed many times at how children voice their strong faith. We need to learn from children and include them in our worship and at the Table.

To me, the church is a family, and family includes all ages. We need to take Jesus' words seriously when he said, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs" (Mark 10:14).

Ruth McCowan,
Victoria

Teen Pages

This past summer, my wife and I joined the Presbyterian church in Hanover, Ontario, and are now reading the *Presbyterian Record*. We noted with interest articles that mentioned the need in the church for more attention to the spiritual support of children and teenagers.

What baffles us is the lack of even four pages in the *Presbyterian Record* to meet the specific needs of school-age children and teens. Is it not important to make the church and what it stands for relevant to these growing youth, in terms they can understand and read for themselves in "their pages"?

Frank DeVisser,
Hanover, Ont.

Marvellous Offering

As one of our Advent activities this year, we drew upon the resources of Rev. Lynne Donovan and her husband, Phil Norton, a wonderful photographer. Together, they presented "Sights and Sounds for a Winter's Night" — a

beautiful compilation of prayers, meditations, carols and awe-inspiring slides.

There is still some winter left. I encourage other churches to enjoy this marvellous offering. Lynne Donovan and Phil Norton can be reached at 99 Theberge, Chateauguay, P.Q. J6J 3K4.

Shaun Seaman,
Kanata, Ont.

Shorter letters are more likely to be published and less likely to be edited

Friends of Education

We read with interest "Should Presbyterians support government-funded religious schools?" (Presbyterian Forum, January

Record). Most of your contributors answered in the negative or expressed pointed reservations.

Like the Presbyterian Inter-Synod Committee on Public and Private Education, the Friends of Public Education in Ontario, Inc. has been concerned with this issue and has been active continuously for almost 15 years. During that time, we have been advocates of equal treatment for religious groups in Ontario's schools and have produced regular newsletters to advise members of continuing developments in this area. A

WATSON'S WORLD

Noel Watson



booklet, entitled *Not Carved in Stone, Public Funding of Separate Schools in Ontario*, published by us in 1992, offers a definitive study of the historical, legal and constitutional background of separate schools and presents a straightforward, unemotional case for a single public school system.

As well as the reasons given by your Forum participants, it should be recognized that the issue of the Government of Ontario's provision of public funds for the total support of a separate school system dedicated to the indoctrination of the religious beliefs of one faith group to the exclusion of all others is a violation of the guarantee of equality of treatment under both the Charter of Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Because of this, our organization has sponsored a submission by four individuals to the Human Rights Committee of the United Nations. This complaint of religious discrimination has been deemed valid by the Human Rights Committee which is awaiting a response from Canada — with either a justification of the abuse or its intended remedies.

In this year of celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, we are proud to be in the forefront as an advocacy group for religious equality and are happy to see a majority of Forum participants agree with us.

*Renton Patterson, president,
Friends of Public Education
in Ontario, Inc.,
Pembroke, Ont.*

None His Equal

I was moved by the splendid obituary reference to the late Dr. Donald Campbell (*Transitions*, Dec. 1998).

Some time ago, the *Record* invited readers to submit their nominations for outstanding preacher. I had no difficulty in making a choice. Sunday after Sunday, in Zion Church, Charlottetown, I marvelled at the consistent high quality of the Campbell sermons. Each was like a fine piece of sculpture with every part perfectly in place — no histrionics, no

excessive volume, simply magnificent and timely exposition. I have heard great preachers in many parts of the world. Never did I hear the equal of Donald Campbell.

*Heath Macquarrie,
Victoria, P.E.I.*

Bible Unclear

I respond to Gary Chiang's letter in the January issue regarding whether the Bible condemns "homosexual practice."

The Bible does not deal with homosexuality as we know it. Jesus said nothing about homosexuality. The debate in the Church today concerns what the Bible does say about homosexuality and "homosexual practice" and how, in the spirit of the Christ, we are to deal with the issue. If the Bible were clear, would we have the debate?

The term "homosexual practice" is vague and misleading. I presume Mr. Chiang means "homosexual intercourse." Heterosexual men hug and kiss one another, pat one another's bottoms and swim naked together (and, perhaps, even with homosexuals). Insofar as our sexuality pervades all we do, I cannot imagine homosexuals practising — relating to others — except as homosexuals any more than heterosexuals practise or relate to others as heterosexuals.

Chiang equates "homosexual practice" with murder or adultery. I cannot agree. How would he rank remarriage of divorced people (which Jesus spoke against)? Does he accept slavery (which the Bible accepts in many places)?

I try to consider those issues in the knowledge I have of the spirit of the Christ who didn't condemn the woman taken in adultery and who didn't condemn the woman at the well who had lived with six men.

*Zander Dunn,
Guelph, Ont.*

A Miracle

The recent policy of the *Presbyterian Record* charging 90 cents per word for publishing news concerning *Transitions* has had a remarkable side effect. It appears to have improved the mortality rate

The sun

is shining, the refreshing breeze blowing. We stand in a circle outside the House of the Prophet at Crieff Hills — 10 women of the Evangel Hall community. Each one of us contributes a prayer of thanksgiving for the past two days together. There is laughter and there are tears. And, then, we get into the van for the trip back to the city — refreshed, renewed and strengthened for life's journey.

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A cow purchased. A life changed.

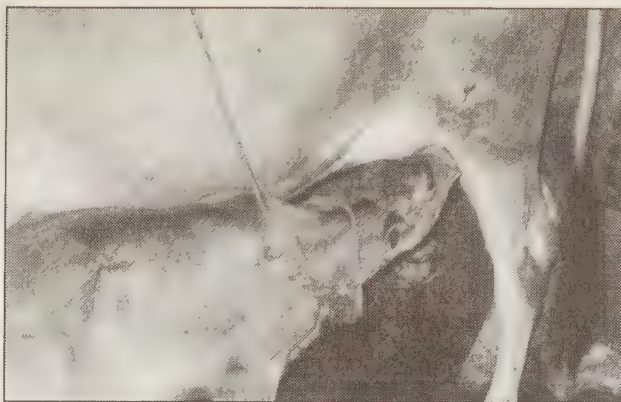


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LETTERS

among Presbyterians — the monthly list of recorded deaths has diminished by at least 75 per cent. The decision to charge for death notices was one of the dumber moves of our Presbyterian Church; but, perhaps, the management foresaw these unexpected benefits.

I respect and enjoy the *Record*, but my primary interest is the activities of laypeople across Canada. I would prefer that this aspect be featured even if it curtails the space allotted to professional theologians and free-lance amateurs.

*Russ Merifield,
Toronto*

Basic Beliefs

As a Gen Xer who has had to choose between homes (England and Canada), I can relate to Kathy Cawsey's "double-edged sword" ("Going Home, Leaving Home," January *Record*). However, I cannot relate to her musings about the existence of heaven. To suggest we made up the idea ("because we cannot face the possibility of self-annihilation") would be fine coming from an atheist. But from a Christian? The Bible makes it clear that God sent Jesus to die for our sins, then brought him back to life so death would no longer have the final victory and so we could be reconciled with God, not only on earth but after we die (Romans 5).

I find it hard enough sharing my faith with my cynical peers, without having to deal with people within the church who seem to make up the Christian faith as they go along. Unlike Kathy, I don't expect to have everything figured out before I die, but I do know there are some basic beliefs that aren't up for negotiation.

*Anne Hall Springle
Hawkestone, Ont.*

Too Liberal

As a result of the increasing liberal atmosphere of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and the content of the *Record*, it is with regret that we ask you to stop sending us any further issues of the *Presbyterian Record*.

*Gordon and Jill Sherret,
Calgary*



Aagh! Aaaaagh!

During our winter holidays a few years ago, I walked on holy ground. It wouldn't impress many people as particularly holy. In fact, you'd be more likely to attach a lot of unholy adjectives to it if you were walking on it in anything but sturdy footwear. It was lava. Relatively recent lava.

There are, according to geologists and vulcanologists (people who study volcanoes and their effects), two kinds of lava. "Pahoehoe" lava forms a relatively smooth surface with a ropy or wrinkled texture. It's rough, but safe. And there's "aa" lava, which is about as user-friendly as broken glass. It's pronounced "aagh-aagh" — perhaps because that's what you're tempted to say when you try to move around on it. It is hellish stuff. It is as hard as nails, as sharp as a rattlesnake's fangs and as sterile as burnt toast. It can cut beach sandals to shreds in minutes. It is utterly hostile and inimical to life.

Yet, here and there, a few hardy seeds manage to take root. A few tiny shoots find enough fragments of nourishment to grow into tiny, stunted plants.

As I walked gingerly along on its surface, I found myself treading gently, thinking, "This is holy ground." It was something I knew intuitively. Nothing persuaded me to think of it as holy and, for the same reason, nothing will ever make me change my mind. For some inexplicable reason, I knew this vicious, inhospitable terrain was holy ground.

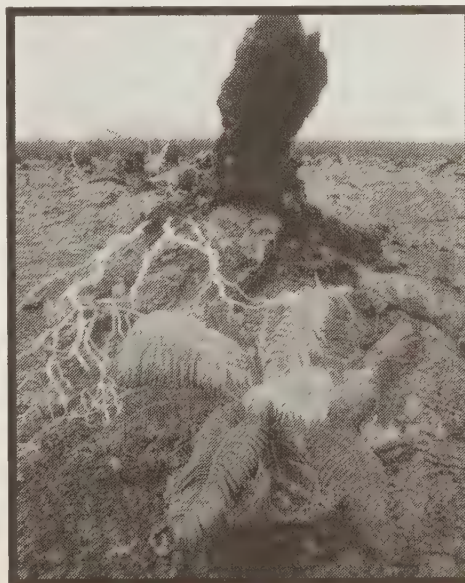
But why should it be holy, I found myself wondering. Surely, holy ground should be the best land, the richest and most fertile fields. As a historic Hebrew grace says: "Blessed art thou, Lord God Creator of the Universe, who bringest forth food from the earth ..." If it's holy, if it's of God, shouldn't it be the place that "brings forth food"?

Yet, it was not the rich river bottomlands of the Nile where God told Moses to remove his sandals, but the arid, sterile sands of the Sinai. And when Abraham and Lot quarrelled, it was not the lush Jordan Valley that Abraham chose for the land where God would eventually found a nation, but the harsh and forbidding limestone wilderness of Judea.

So what makes certain ground holy?

I asked a couple of women's groups, about 70 people altogether, about their experiences of treading on holy ground. Predictably, no two people had the same experience. But they agreed about some characteristics. The experience always came unexpectedly. It often came at times of crisis or trauma. It was often accompanied by a sudden sense of peace. And it was absolutely convincing at the time; it left no room for doubt or debate.

I can't help thinking holy ground has something to do with struggle, too. The struggle to survive. To risk and, against all odds, to gain a foothold.



Why holy ground sometimes hurts our tender feet

When success comes easily, we tend to take it for granted. We take the credit ourselves. When we wrap ourselves in a cocoon of complacency, God has trouble reaching us. Only when we have to struggle are we exposed enough, barefoot enough, to feel the prodding of God.

Perhaps, too, God picks the inhospitable places as "holy ground" to counter our human desires for instant results. Our culture promotes "fast, fast relief."

Think about all the fast-food outlets. Or the cosmetics that offer instant beauty (well, at least improvement in half an hour). Listen to the advertising for non-prescription drugs.

Perhaps, every culture has such an obsession. Because almost every religion stresses that change does not happen easily. Yoga is a lifelong discipline, not a quick fix. Buddhism requires intensive meditation and commitment. Islam calls for a lifetime of submission and obedience.

At its core, Christianity says that resurrection, new life, doesn't come with casual acquiescence. It's not simply an optional extra, like cruise control or air-conditioning. Before the resurrection comes the crucifixion. The old things, the old ways, have to die. Dying is not a comfortable experience. We have to let go. We have to be willing to let go of those things we hold most dear: our friends, our family, our loved ones, even ourselves. We have to be willing to start all over again in a landscape that may seem as inhospitable and lifeless as that "aagh-aagh" lava. And, then — perhaps, only then — can new life begin. **R**

Jim Taylor is a writer, editor and co-founder of Wood Lake Books.



Dr. Doom & the Dance of the Dead

Ezekiel 37, Psalm 130, John 11:1-45

Sometimes called “the doctor of doom” and sometimes, more pleasantly, “the oddest prophet,” Ezekiel uses some marvellous imagery. In this well-known scene, the prophet takes a visionary journey from exile in Babylon to the almost wasteland of Jerusalem. What does he see? He sees the house of Israel as if in a scene in a bad movie where the forces return to the main camp to find nothing but scraggly vultures and sun-bleached bones. He finds an Israel that is dusty, disjointed and, to all intents and purposes, dead. A grave situation!

A young contemporary of the prophet Jeremiah, Ezekiel was exiled to Babylon. He was probably a priest and, certainly, a man who held considerable interest in the Temple. The reforms of Josiah likely had a major impact on Ezekiel and his theology.

Like other prophets, Ezekiel engaged in symbolic action to present his message dramatically. He drew a picture on a brick of a city under siege to illustrate Jerusalem's fate. He set a road sign at the crossroads to show that the Babylonian king was at the crossroads. He ate the rations of a city under attack. He shaved himself with a sharp sword and dispersed the hair to show the fate of the people of the city. To illustrate the seriousness of Jerusalem's situation, he packed his bags and left his house through a hole dug in the wall.

With so many citizens of Jerusalem removed to Babylon, the faith of the people was like “death warmed over.” The population existed somewhere between barely alive and stone-cold dead. Was there any hope? “Mortal, can these

bones live?” Can a doctor help? Can money do it? How can what is dead and gone be revived? The situation was beyond human hope. From the human perspective, it was mission impossible.

Pause now and read Psalm 130, “the miserable cry of a nobody from nowhere” (Brueggemann).

God brings new life out of the dead bones of gloom, despair and death

Individuals and nations tend not to turn to God unless they are down and out. “Can these bones live?” The answer, supplied by Dr. Doom, is that God can revive his deceased people. God's Spirit or breath (same word) can make the bones rise and dance and sing.

God can do it. God, who made these bones, can take the dry bones of life and breathe Spirit into them, and “them bones gonna rise again.” In the words of Ann Weems:

*The stirring wildness of God
calls brittle bones to leaping
and stone hearts to soaring.
Old women dance among the stars.*

In the New Testament, a similar situation occurs in the story of Lazarus (John 11:1-45). The very name Lazarus means “God helps” in Hebrew. This friend of Jesus' was “at rest,” “asleep” — as in many languages, a euphemism for death. We don't like to use the word “death” — as if the word could call forth the reality. Lazarus “passed away,” died and was buried in Bethany. He spent four days in death, and his friends had given up on him — and on Jesus.

No silent Buddha, Jesus cried. He cried before the tomb because he cared — cared for life and cared for Lazarus. Lazarus' friends wanted to know where Jesus had been when they needed him.

“If only you had been here,” complained his sisters, Martha and Mary. But he wasn't, and he made the seemingly ridiculous claim that his very absence and the death of Lazarus would lead to praise of God. Out of the dry bones of gloom, despair and death, God would bring forth new life.

And, then, Jesus breathed life into the stench of Lazarus' dry and dusty, still and silent bones. Lazarus rose. Lazarus laughed. Lazarus leaped. And Lazarus danced.

At a dinner party in Dorothy Sayers' play *The Man Born to Be King*, Lazarus is asked what it feels like to be dead. He reluctantly replies: “This life is like the weaving at the back of the loom. All you see is the crossing of the threads. In that life, you go round to the front and see the wonder of the pattern. What sort of pattern is it? Beautiful and terrible. And — how can I tell you? — it is familiar. You have known it from all eternity. For He that made it is the form of all things, Himself both the weaver and the loom.” **R**

For Discussion and Reflection

- Can you see the relationship of the three Scripture passages?
- Are there parallels with the church of our time?
- How do you identify with the need for the Spirit/breath of God?
- What did Robert Capon mean when he wrote: “Jesus came to raise the dead. Not to improve the improvable, not to perfect the imperfectible, but to raise the dead”?

L. E. (Ted) Sivers is the minister of First Church in New Westminster, B.C.

Practical Prodigality

Russ Merifield

Peter Trueman's reference to Henri Nouwen's *The Return of the Prodigal Son* (For the Record, March '98 issue) scratched an old wound. My minority view on this inspiring parable of forgiveness may be like that of the proud mother who observed that every boy in the parade was out of step except her son Jimmy. In brief, I have empathy with the dutiful son.

I have heard sermons that denounce the older son as a mean, self-centred, self-righteous, humourless prig who should have been ashamed of himself for raining on his father's celebration. The traditional message is that, if God is willing to forgive the myriads of wretches in this world, surely I can put aside my prejudices against a member of my own family. But the unheralded indiscretion in this episode was an act of insensitivity. The joyous father was so elated by the return of his lost son that he forgot about the rest of his family.

Personally, I do not find it unusual that the father in this story welcomed and forgave his repentant, humiliated son. I think most loving fathers would have acted similarly. I sometimes wonder, however, what the father's reaction would have been had the wayward one been a daughter who came home barefoot and pregnant. I think fathers are inclined to recall their own youthful midemeanours and say, "Boys will be boys." My wife dislikes this parable and many other biblical stories that omit any thought about the wife or mother. My explanations about the patriarchal society of Bible times fall on deaf ears.

The question arose in my mind, Is insensitivity a sin? I did a modest bit of research on the definition of sin but did not

find the answers I was looking for. Sin seems to be somewhat legalistic, largely based on the "Thou shalt not" commandments. Yet, I think more hurt has been caused by insensitivity than by breach of some commandments. The sin here, if any, was unintentional. But, as it has

been said, "The road to hell is paved with good intentions." Aside from morality, the insensitive or, let us say, impulsive act of the father was a classic case of botched human relations.

No person likes to be confronted with a *fait accompli*. The responsible, sacrificing older brother was understandably frustrated. Perhaps, the story would have proceeded differently had the father gone quickly to the older son and given him the prior opportunity of being sympathetic and gracious.

True, the father tried to placate his angry older son, telling him that all he had belonged to his faithful one. But my inference is this was an afterthought. The father had already commanded the ser-

vants, organized the banquet and hired the musicians and dancers.

We have all observed family situations where the responsible child does the work while others enjoy themselves. Cynics sometimes pass this off as a martyr complex. There is no doubt the father, initially at least, was so wound up in his personal celebration that he did not realize his older son was starved for affection and recognition.

For me, the ancillary lesson in this parable is that we should not so concentrate on our own interests that we fail to anticipate the feelings of others. Every person, after getting basic food and shelter, desires the love and esteem of one's associates. So often, we postpone those kind words of appreciation until it is too late.

The parable of the lost son is an inspiring story of forgiveness, but it should also be a warning of the bitterness that may be caused by well-intended stupidity. **R**

Russ Merifield is an elder in Glenview Church, Toronto, and a past treasurer of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

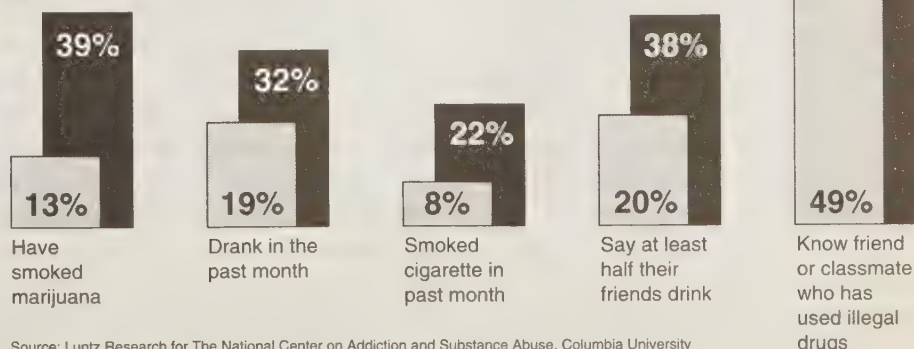
A minority viewpoint on the Parable of the Prodigal Son

Religion and Teen Users

A national survey of teens found that those who attend religious services regularly are less likely to use drugs and alcohol than those who do not attend regular services.

Those who attend religious services:

☐ 4 times a month ☒ Less than once a month



Source: Luntz Research for The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse, Columbia University

A Little Idea That Grew

Shirley Charleson

It has often been said that significant ministries can begin when God speaks to one person. Apparently, that is what happened in 1993 at Bridlewood Church, Agincourt, Ontario. Jacob Birch, the congregation's youth pastor at the time, approached the session with his vision for a Just For Kids Day Camp. By the next summer, the first camp was held.

From the beginning, the camp was intended to provide high quality programs at low cost. Children from ages five to 12 can register for one or more of four two-week sessions held during July and August. (There is also a program for 13- to 15-year-old leaders in training.) Each session has a theme, such as "The Environment," "Living Like Jesus," "Resolving Conflicts" and "Friends." Days are broken down into three major segments: Bible study, creative arts and recreation. There are also opportunities for group activities, free time, quiet time for the younger children and one field trip every week. Campers bring their own lunches and the congregation provides snacks.

The first Just For Kids Day Camp started modestly, with Jacob filling the role of director, assisted by two co-ordinators whose salaries were covered by a grant from the Federal Government Summer Employment Program (FGSEP). Many volunteers from the congregation and community supported the staff. Of the 193 spaces filled, eight campers were from the congregation and the rest, both church and unchurched, from the multicultural community. The opportunity to reach these families provided an incentive to move forward.

The following year, the staff increased to five. The number of camper



Campers from the Just for Kids Day Camp enjoy a field trip with their program co-ordinator.

registrations increased to 205. As well as funding from the FGSEP, the camp received financial support from the trustees of the Cookes Fund.

In 1996, the leaders-in-training program was added. The ongoing growth of the Just For Kids Day Camp (217 campers registered) continued to provide encouragement.

How a congregation's day camp for kids became an outreach to the community

The next year, when the camp's founder, Jacob Birch, left Bridlewood for other ministry opportunities, it became clear the camp's outreach ministry had become the responsibility of the entire congregation, not simply one individual. A director and four co-ordinators were employed, with most of the positions filled by students from the congregation. The camp committee also decided to employ three counsellors, one for each camper age group, to work with the groups as they moved from one activity to another. This proved to be an excellent complement to the program. The number of campers registered grew to 223, plus nine leaders in training.

Last summer, there were 235 campers registered and 29 leaders in training.

Fewer students were available from the congregation to fill staff positions so a greater emphasis was placed on advertising the jobs. Of the staff of eight, six came from outside the Bridlewood Church family. Unfortunately, outside funding did not fare as well. Fortunately, a new source — the Ontario Summer Jobs Service — provided new hope in the form of a subsidy toward the salaries of six staff members.

The struggle to maintain the low cost aspect of the camp aside, the congregation of Bridlewood has come to realize it has a wonderful means of reaching into one of the most culturally diverse communities in North America. In 1998, the Just For Kids Day Camp reached 109 families who had no other contact with the congregation. With results such as these, the challenges have strengthened the congregation's faith in the direction of the Holy Spirit. **R**

Congregations interested in learning more about the Just For Kids Day Camp, can contact: Mrs. Shirley Charleson, Just For Kids Day Camp Committee, Bridlewood Presbyterian Church, 2501 Warden Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M1W 2L6.

Shirley Charleson is the chair of the Just For Kids Day Camp Committee.

My dear editor:

Not all readers will be aware of the brown envelope that intermittently lands on congregations like a load of wet guilt sliding off the roof of the team's arena at 50 Wynford Drive. It is full of enthusiasms and challenges — a veritable omnibus of information about things we "out here" should be doing, rejoicing in, planning for or passing on to someone.

The trouble is, most congregations and sessions lack an internal communication network equal to the task. Outside of the Pentagon, I wonder if anyone has. And almost all suggestions seem to involve another committee, or the expansion of the agenda of an existing one, or yet one more appeal for an "interested contact person" or "representative."

We do *not* have claimants for either avenue of service lining up to be served like customers at a delicatessen counter. In fact, one congregation in our bounds has made enough money to renovate *both* washrooms by allowing people to buy their freedom from servitude on committees for five years. They are calling it their own version of the "jubilee."

One piece in a recent mailing did spur the congregation of Gilead Presbyterian into action. This surprised presbytery since, under The Rev. "Joyless John" McWhirter (sometimes known as "The Bomb in Gilead"), the congregation was more of a burr than a spur.

The piece of mail was the poster urging all to "Celebrate!" That Joyless John took notice of it was attributed to the typeface at the top bearing an uncanny resemblance to the old *Globe and Mail* banner, and the size of the headline underneath looking like the announcement of the end of the Second World War. We assumed John thought it was one of the *Globe's* reproductions of past front pages with an offer of a free trial subscription.

He re-entered reality when he read your clarion call as past-Moderator: "'Get behind celebrations,' Moderator encourages."

Now, John and his people have always taken pride in being behind. In fairness, they have provided a useful brake

on some of our ill-thought-out enthusiasms. But they have paid the price by becoming a metaphor for all that stands between us and the Second Coming.

Now, not only would he follow an "official encouragement," thereby blunting the barbs of his tormentors, he would be first off the mark. Reasoning that January of next year is *not* the start of the new millennium and that *at least* 2004 years have passed since the birth of our Lord, he attributed all the excitement to "a pagan fascination with zeros." He decided to proceed without waiting.

Gilead Presbyterian would undertake a "millennium project beyond their walls for the good of the community," as instructed. They would even observe the "suggested areas": (a) Music, Art and Culture, (b) Youth, (c) Exposure Tours/Exchanges With Canada and International Ministries, (d) Congregational History and Recognition of Senior Members, (e) Faith-Sharing Among Members, (f) Health and Your Congregation — opportunities for physical and spiritual care for aging congregational members, (g) The Year of Jubilee — justice for the marginalized, and multicultural and environmental activities with ecumenical friends.

First, John announced his intentions to the "community." Well, sort of. The fact is, neither John nor the people of Gilead have a high opinion of their immediate neighbourhood. (They are in an "economically disadvantaged" downtown core to which most drive from more pleasant pastures on Sundays.) So John did his announcing via an invitation, hand-written with a felt-tip pen on the back of an old ushers roster. He taped it to the fading sign at the entrance of the church, just below "Almost Everyone Welcome!" and above "SILENCE! You Are Entering God's House!"

The announcement bore news of a bus trip to an exhibition of Inuit art on the campus of a nearby university. Young people were invited and encouraged to bring their portable tape and CD players. They were told they could play all the "jitterbug" music they wanted provided they had headphones. Following the art exhibit, they would enjoy a meal at an Indian restaurant, with John reading to them from a WMS history of our missionary efforts in India while they ate. (John, himself, hated Indian food.) Thus, (a), (b) and (c) were fulfilled.

New frames were provided for the photographs and daguerreotypes of past ministers. Polaroids taken of senior members, their names and years of membership printed underneath, were posted on the bulletin board: (d) was accomplished.

The session urged the people to "have faith that this exercise will amount to more than a hill of beans": (e) was crossed off.

A neighbourhood organic food store that was being closed by the public health authorities provided a case of herbal tea at a good enough price for John to resell at a modest profit. He also transformed an unused room next to the furnace into "an In Memoriam Crypt — wherein the ashes of the faithful can rest within the walls they loved so well. Cheaper than Shady Acres!" So much for (f).

Finally, (g). He made an arrangement with the Salvation Army next door to go halvers on hiring a Sri Lankan refugee to clean up the trash in the alley between the two buildings at slightly more than the minimum wage.

And it all cost less than the suggested \$125 "seed money."

Yours co-operatively.

Peter Plymley II

How Gilead Presbyterian, under The Rev. "Joyless John" McWhirter, has met the millennium challenge to celebrate



THE EIGHTH ASSEMBLY OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES: The View From Three Vantage Points

compiled by Tom Dickey

Amid disagreement between liberal and conservative members of the World Council of Churches (WCC) over the direction of the 50-year-old global ecumenical body, the WCC held its Eighth Assembly in Harare, Zimbabwe, December 3-14. The WCC, which meets every seven years, represents 400 million Christians from more than 300 Protestant and Orthodox denominations. Logistical difficulties and last-minute tensions aside, almost 5,000 participants gathered under an enormous tent on the University of Zimbabwe campus for the opening worship service the afternoon of December 3. Among the 5,000 were four Canadian Presbyterians: Rev. Karen Hincke (*centre right*) and Rev. Margaret Robertson (*centre left*), delegates to the WCC Decade Festival held in Harare November 27-30; and Adele Halliday (*far right*) and Rev. Ken Stright (*far left*), delegates to the WCC Eighth Assembly.



Photo courtesy of Margaret Robertson

Nelson Mandela told the Assembly he had come to Harare remembering the days of apartheid governments in southern Africa "when the name of the World Council of Churches struck fear into the hearts of our oppressors."

In those days, he said, "to speak favourably of the World Council of Churches was to be an enemy of the state."

Tears of Sorrow, Tears of Joy

by Margaret Robertson

I arrived in Harare for the World Council of Churches celebration of the Ecumenical Decade, Churches in Solidarity with Women in Church and Society. I was filled with questions. What would this event be like? Could we really celebrate the end of 10 years of work that seemed incomplete? Could we accomplish anything? What images would linger after the festival was over?

Since my return home, one image continues to surface: water. Water in many forms, especially tears. This image was reinforced in a powerful and symbolic way during the opening session. From the gathering of more than 1,000 women and about 30 men, many came forward with little bottles of water to fill a large African clay pot, which remained prominently front and centre throughout the festival.

The water also represented a continuation of the work carried on in Canada for the past 10 years. On August 26, 1998, more than 700 women, men and children met at the University of Guelph, On-

tario, for a five-day celebration of the Ecumenical Decade called "Daring Hope." Delegates to Daring Hope had brought water with them. Some of that water from Guelph ended up in a large clay pot in Harare.

What had brought us all together? In 1988, the WCC determined that the churches needed to be in solidarity with women around the world as they struggled for recognition and equality. A mid-decade survey identified the primary and most common struggle as the struggle against violence.

And, so, we came with tears — survivors' tears and tears for those who had not survived. The tears were real and powerful. They came from the victims of war, globalization, sexual slavery, domestic violence, ritual and institutional abuse, and more. We listened to five stories of violence against women — stories so gripping, I wondered how we could continue. Then, we heard about some of the positive programs and actions of

From Solidarity to Accountability

When the Decade Festival presented its letter, entitled "From Solidarity to Accountability," to the WCC Eighth Assembly, it received enthusiastic support and was accepted with strong recommendations such as the following:

- that the WCC prepare guidelines for "inter-gender conduct" incorporating the understanding that violence against women is a sin
- that the churches provide opportunities for women to speak out against violence and abuse where both the victims and the perpetrators can experience forgiveness and reconciliation
- that the work of the WCC in de-legitimizing war and speaking out on behalf of women and children who are the innocent victims of war and violence be reaffirmed
- that churches be encouraged to use liturgies, language and policies that support the inclusion of all people in leadership positions in all levels of church life
- that the WCC advocate debt cancellation measures, with the resources saved to be used to improve the quality of life, especially for women, youth and children
- that the WCC denounce the commercial sexual exploitation of women and children
- that the WCC support the development of just economic systems and structures in church and society so that all people may experience "the blessings of justice, equal pay for equal work, sustainable and livable wages, and honourable labour practices"
- that the Assembly commend to member churches the United Nations document *Beijing Platform for Action* and the UN Decade of Eradication of Poverty 1997-2007
- that the Assembly ask member churches to find ways to keep the goals of the Ecumenical Decade before them.

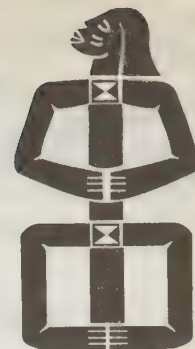
women and churches around the world.

A healing service became our final preparation. It left us knowing tears of sorrow would not hinder our work but, rather, give us the energy to complete it.

Our main and most difficult task was to take a prepared document and shape it into a letter to the WCC Assembly. We had two sessions to accomplish the task. By the second session, it began to look like mission impossible. Some WCC member

churches (especially Orthodox) do not discuss gender issues. Yet, on the afternoon of the last day, we somehow reached consensus. There was loud and prolonged applause. Tears of sorrow had become tears of joy. It was a time to celebrate. It was a festival. So, we worshipped and sang, and sang, late into the evening.

(Margaret Robertson is program secretary of the Women's Missionary Society.)



A Message From Youth

"We are the youth of the Eighth Assembly of the World Council of Churches: 400 beautiful shades of colour, culture and confession."

"Because of the faithfulness of our forebears, we have no memory of a church that is not ecumenical."

"We proclaim, *once again*, that we are not only the leaders of tomorrow, but we have a full contribution to make today. It continues to anger us that there are still those who imply that, as youth, we are not full members in the Body of Christ."

"A new ecumenical paradigm must seek new forms of power. We believe that this is the essence of the call to Jubilee. Such new forms of power extend to the whole *oikoumene*."

(Excerpts from the message presented to the Eighth Assembly by the PAYE Listening Team)



Various huts were set up where delegates gathered to discuss issues such as violence against women.



An Assembly for a New Millennium

by Ken Stright

Thousands wait expectantly under the massive canopy, the noise of wind and weather competing with the hum of voices. Hundreds ready themselves in the Assembly choir. A greeting is offered, a drum calls us to silence, then the blast of a horn calls us to worship. We gather with the words of the jubilee (Leviticus 25:9-10) echoing in our ears and in our hearts.

A Universal Christian Forum

The Assembly gave its backing to the creation of a Forum of Christian Churches and Ecumenical Organizations which could extend the World Council's reach far beyond its more than 330 member churches. The proposed forum could potentially bring to a single ecumenical table nearly all of the main Christian churches and organizations in the world, including many that are not members, such as the Roman Catholic Church and major Pentecostal and Evangelical churches.

So began my extraordinary journey to the Eighth Assembly of the World Council of Churches. The next two weeks were filled with constant meetings, planning groups, prayer circles, tea times, plenary sessions and information overload (10 kilograms worth).

On top of my duties as a delegate, I had been named to the Policy Reference Committee II. Every day over lunch, I spent a minimum two hours "locked up" with other committee members discussing and praying about the reports we were preparing. We had been mandated to present recommendations to the Assembly on globalization, international debt, matters emerging from the plenary sessions on Africa, and the Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women.

For many people, the real power of an Assembly is found in the wonderful worship and the feeling of family that develops among the delegates. The Assembly in Harare brought out a true test of family when a flu-like illness sent 600 people to the medical clinic in the first five days. Committees that had seemed a bit overstaffed dwindled to a precious few. My "family" experience came from serving with the other

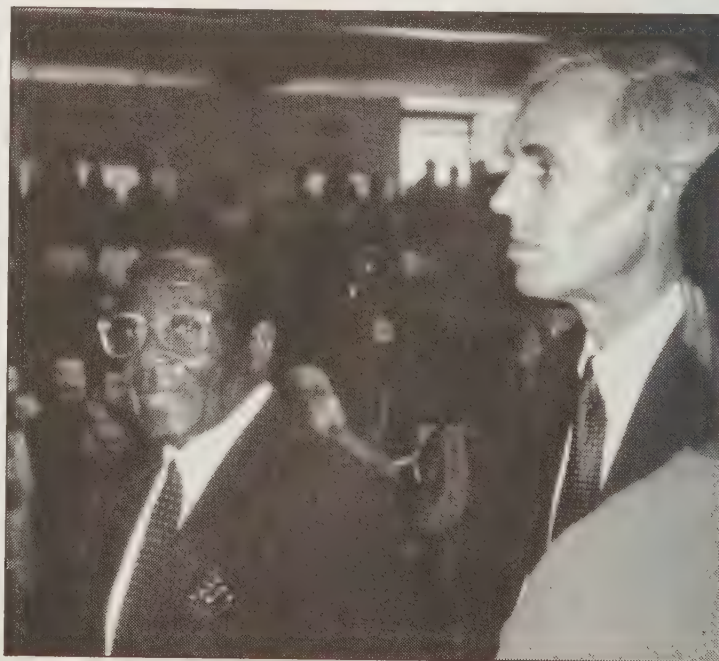
members of the policy committee, as we got to know one another — in sickness and in health.

In reflection, I am amazed at the experiences squeezed into two weeks. Every day began and ended with worship. In between were small group discussions, Bible reflection groups, hearings on the work of the WCC, reports from the Moderator and General Secretary, plenary sessions and hundreds of *padares* (a Shona word meaning "meeting place") set aside for discussion of everything from spirituality to sexuality. Added to this were visits from two African presidents, Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe (twice) and Nelson Mandela of South Africa. Most remarkable, perhaps, was the lack of controversy, conflict and chaos as thousands of opinionated people from across the spectrum of Christ's Church sat and deliberated together with, for the most part, the greatest respect.

One of the many highlights for me was the Ecumenical Recommitment service at which hundreds of churches exchanged crosses. We exchanged with the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan, a partner church of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The Taiwanese cross will make its way from Pictou, Nova Scotia, to the national church offices (eventually).

I still don't know what long-term effects my trip to Africa and the Eighth Assembly will have on my ministry and my sense of mission, but it has, unquestionably, changed my life.

(Ken Stright is minister of St. Andrew's Church, Pictou, N.S.)

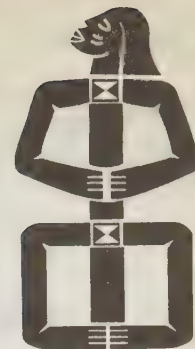


Robert Mugabe, president of Zimbabwe (left), with Konrad Raiser, WCC General Secretary.

"There is no growth without risk. Yet, we must grow together responsibly, challenging, understanding and respecting each other. This is the call of God. This is the sacred task before us."

(Aram I of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Lebanon, Moderator of the WCC)

Photo: Adele Halliday



From Generation to Generation

by Adele Halliday

As a young person under the age of 30, I do not remember the beginning of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam in 1948. Indeed, at that time, my parents were children themselves. The knowledge I have gleaned about the WCC comes not from my memory, but from the experience of being involved in the ecumenical movement. Meetings with young people from other denominations, Bible studies with people from different confessions, worshipping together as people of one faith — that is my memory.

I was honoured to represent The Presbyterian Church in Canada at this international and ecumenical gathering. In addition to the Assembly, I attended the Decade Festival and the Pre-Assembly Youth Event (PAYE). At the latter, young people from around the world joined me in looking at youth issues and how to make ourselves heard by the Assembly. I was also a member of the Listening Team (composed of one representative from each of the eight regions) responsible for listening carefully to our peers. We presented the Assembly with a message entitled "From Generation to Generation: towards a new paradigm for ecumenism." The message was not intended as a policy document and did not exhaust all matters with which young people are concerned.

The WCC has often come under fire for its liberalism, particularly its stance on various social justice issues. At the same time, many people feel the council is too conservative. In such a setting as the Eighth Assembly, it is easy to focus on what divides rather than what unites. All differences



Photo: Adele Halliday

A member of the Assembly choir, wearing an aboriginal head-dress and Zimbabwean shirt. The choir performed during worship each day.

melt away when diverse people join together in song and in worship of the same God.

At this Assembly, I came to a better understand-

ing of grace. I am grateful for those who have paved the way, but I realize how much work needs to be done in terms of Christian unity. Yet, in a world where many walk in hunger, in fear and alone, we are able to turn to God and rejoice in hope.

(Adele Halliday, a member of Dixie Church, Mississauga, Ont., recently served as Christian education director at Guildwood Community Church, Scarborough, Ont., and is currently teaching in Belize.)

"The Ecumenical Decade, Churches in Solidarity with Women, has made a dramatic plea for the space to make the church truly an inclusive community."

(Konrad Raiser, WCC General Secretary)

Recommendations, Reports and Resolutions

The Assembly acted on dozens of recommendations and reports. Statements were made on the violence against Christians in Sudan; full participation in churches by women, youth, indigenous people, disabled people; the status of Jerusalem and assorted other matters. On its last day, the Assembly adopted, in whirlwind fashion, resolutions on global debt, globalization, the status of Jerusalem, child soldiers and human rights. The global debt resolution called for debt cancellation for impoverished nations, debt reduction for middle-income nations and participation by "civil society" in determining how funds made available by debt cancellation are spent. The globalization resolution called for "formulating alternative responses to activities of transnational corporations and other international financial institutions, and restrictions on the unlimited flow of capital that produces instant profits and equally instant disasters for the rich and poor." The Assembly declared that the status of Jerusalem must be decided by the three faith groups — Jews, Christians and Muslims — for whom the city is holy and by the two peoples who call it home — Israelis and Palestinians.

What's a Nice Poet Like Joy Kogawa Doing Making Money?

by John Congram

These days, Joy Kogawa, acclaimed Canadian novelist and poet, spends all her time promoting the Toronto Dollar: she believes this is what God wants her to do

Her novels mark out the passages of Joy Kogawa's spiritual journey that began in Vancouver in the '30s. *Obasan*, published in 1981, tells the story of Japanese-Canadians during the Second World War through the eyes of Naomi, a five-year-old. In this novel, Joy wrestles with the question of abandonment.

Itsuka followed *Obasan* in 1992. Now grown and teaching school on the Prairies, Naomi becomes involved in the Japanese-Canadian fight for redress. Joy's political journey takes us deep into her own soul as well as into the soul of Canada.

And, finally, *The Rain Ascends* (1995) tells the story of the daughter of an eminent minister of the church. She discovers in middle age that the elderly father she adores has abused young boys throughout his life. This, Joy describes as her "deep journey" — one she is relieved is over because it was so painful. "I am so glad it is finished. It was such a hard



one." No, it wasn't a question of courage or strength. "It was where I discovered the reality of mercy."

Wound around the novels, like a spider's web holding it all together, is her poetry. The first book of poems, *The Splintered Moon*, was published in 1967. Many have followed.

Certain ants
in seasons of rain
cluster together
into ant balls
that tumble over
troubled waters
till they touch
dry land.

In this season
of much drowning
much clutching
and clustering
it is enough
to breathe
occasionally.

— "Certain Ants"

Today, Joy has moved on to a new phase of her spiritual journey. She sits in her 26th-floor apartment overlooking the Toronto harbour, but her heart is consumed with what is happening in the streets below. She wrestles with the meaning of sacrifice in an age of abundance. It has led her, with a few others, to begin manufacturing money; namely, Toronto Dollars.

The Toronto Dollar Community Projects Inc., a coalition of business and cultural groups, has established a community currency as another way to bring money into a community. Retailers and businesses in the St. Lawrence Market area, over 60 to date, have been co-opted to accept the Toronto Dollar as legal currency. But it is money with a difference. When someone buys a Toronto Dollar, 10 per cent of the proceeds goes to community projects. Launched in December 1998, the first grant has already been made to the Out of the Cold program. It is a project, she says, that has left her "burnt out at both ends and in the middle."

But what do you do, she asks, in a society where belief in the market-place has become so strong it has become a law that can no longer be questioned? If

“We are abandoned
yet we are not abandoned.
You are present in every hell.
Teach us to see Love's presence
in our abandonment.
Teach us to forgive.”

— from *Obasan*

you are Joy Kogawa, you do what you have always done: try to inject "a little drop of clear water into a polluted pool." Besides, she points out, maybe it will be a start in changing the way people think.

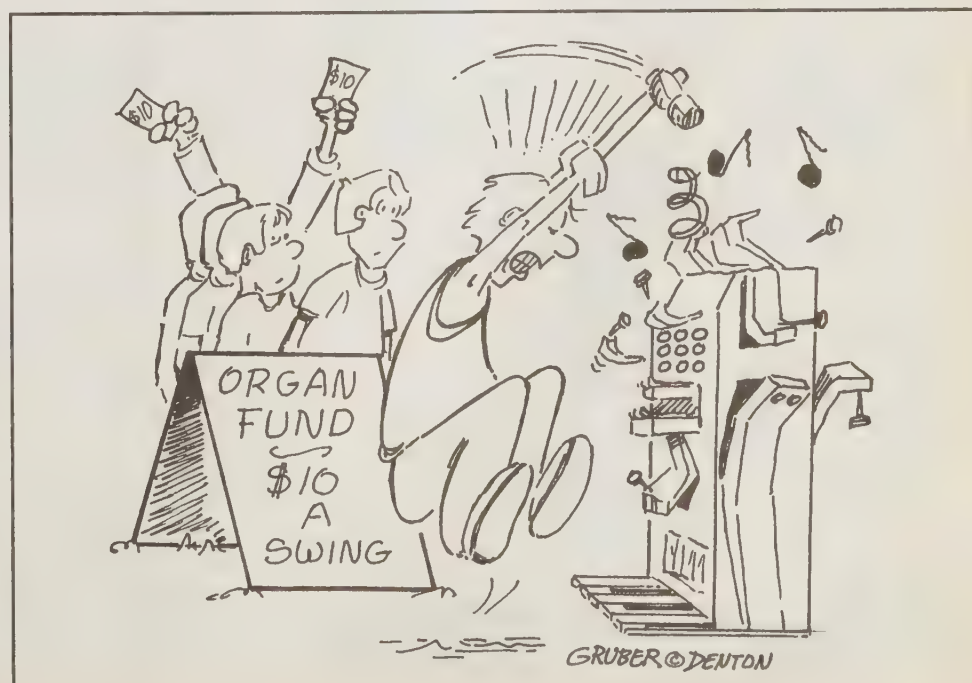
She has always had a hunger for meaning, she explains. "I feel strongly guided even in this crazy thing [the Toronto Dollar]. What confidence do I have at this point that this is what God wants me to do? Sometimes, I am filled with doubts. But, at least, I am trusting. If it is not right, I believe God will bring me out of this path. Until then, I will keep doing what I'm doing."

But, on this day, she contemplates an assignment that fills her with worry. Knox College has asked her to lead the two-day seminar (May 10 and 11) that precedes convocation. "I don't think I'm a speaker, a performer or a scholar. Speaking makes me nervous," she tells Art Van Seters, principal of Knox.

Van Seters, an unabashed admirer of Kogawa, tries to reassure her by telling her why it is important that she come. "Theological students and ministers," he says, "need exposure to novelists and poets." She has much to teach us. It will be more than enough for her simply to be herself.

Joy still fears she may disappoint the participants. She wonders what the issues are that concern church people today. Yet, all her life, she has handled religious questions: abandonment, justice, how to make sense of life, how to draw parallels. Maybe, it would be useful to share her spiritual journey and ask the participants to share theirs. Yes, the questions she wrestles with today — "Where is Jesus? How do I experience his presence? With whom can I pray?" — may be theirs as well.

She will go and offer what she has: herself, her journey. **R**



WHY OUR FRIENDS WON'T STOP



LOOK
AND

LISTEN

BY JOHN G. STACKHOUSE JR.

Who is this 'Apostle Paul' you're referring to?" I was quietly thunderstruck at 35,000 feet. On a flight from Chicago to Minneapolis, I was talking with my seatmate. A young executive on her way to a new job, she told me a little about herself. Among other things, I found out she had earned university degrees from the Ivy League Dartmouth College, New Hampshire, and from the internationally recognized School of Business at the University of Chicago.

She, in turn, asked me about my work. At the time, I was teaching at the University of Manitoba. I joked that some of my introductory students could not place Jesus Christ and the Apostle Paul in correct chronological order.

"Who is this 'Apostle Paul' you're referring to?" she asked. I thought her reply was a clever joke, until I realized she was serious.

This ignorance among the educated is a sign of the times. Too much of our Christian witness today concentrates upon trying to convince people that Christianity is true. We need, instead, to consider two prior problems. First, most Americans and Canadians are ignorant of even the basics of authentic Christian faith. And, second, most Americans and Canadians *think* they *do* understand Christianity and, thus, feel entitled to dismiss it out-of-hand.

**CHRISTIANS
HURT THEIR
OWN CAUSE;
CHRISTIAN
LEADERS
HAVE MADE
THE FAITH
REPELLANT**

CONFIDENT IGNORANCE

Sociological studies and polls in both countries show what most of us already know firsthand: most people do not understand even the fundamentals of the Christian religion. Ask someone to list the Ten Commandments, or tell you the title of the second book of the Bible, or identify the disciple who denied Jesus three times. Less than half of the population can do so.

Beyond Bible knowledge, ask your friend to explain basic doctrines such as the atonement, or the Trinity, or justification by faith — doctrines without which you simply cannot explain the Christian religion. Our friends, even some in the pew next

to us, simply do not have the elementary knowledge of Christianity that one could expect of university students who have completed an introductory course on world religions.

Yet, this problem of ignorance is compounded by one or the other of two widespread assumptions: either (a) people are already Christian or (b) they are not Christian, but they do understand enough of the faith to have judged it unworthy of further consideration.

In the former instance, the poll data in both countries show large majorities willing to affirm their belief not only in God but also in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and the Bible as the inspired word of God. The majority of both countries continue to identify themselves as Christian. Yet, most Americans and Canadians do not attend church even weekly. Most do not read the Bible regularly. And more than a quarter of the population in each country declares, for the record, allegiance to such decidedly non-Christian ideas as the validity of astrology and the reality of reincarnation.

Many Canadians and Americans who are not Christians still have had some contact with the church, especially either as children at Sunday school or by attending weddings and other rites of passage. They may not know much Bible history or Christian doctrine, but they think they know *some* things: Christianity is old-fashioned, boring, irrelevant and intellectually second-rate. In many respects, sadly, these friends of ours are right. What they encountered probably *was* old-fashioned, boring, irrelevant and intellectually second-rate. Their mistake lies in believing this sort of experience is all there is to the Christian faith.

We Christians have hurt our own cause. Christian leaders have made the faith repellent. Sexual abuse, particularly by homosexual and paedophilic Roman Catholic priests, has badly hurt the image of the Church. So-called mainline Protestantism is less visible in the scandal pages, but it continues to endure its own costly time of reckoning as denominational leaders scandalize many with heretical pronouncements or financial misbehaviour. Evangelical Christianity,

for its part, has been trammelled by the Two Jimmys, Bakker and Swaggart, and their ilk on both sides of the border.

We fail to appreciate the scope of this problem, though, if we limit it to the spectacular public failures. When I talk with people, especially during call-in radio shows, over and over I hear about a hypocritical Christian mother or an abusive Christian father or a mean-spirited Christian pastor. Many, many of our friends have had firsthand experience with an "unchristian Christian," and it has turned them off the church entirely.

So, we reinforce the confident ignorance of our friends. And this poses a problem we have not fully faced in our Christian witness.

THE QUESTION OF PLAUSIBILITY

Much of our apologetics and evangelism is misdirected to the problem of credibility: is Christianity true? To answer this question, we pile up reasons and arguments and evidences we hope will overwhelm every sceptic and bring every doubter to faith. The trouble is,



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earnest Christians come armed to the teeth for battles that rarely occur. We are eager to convince all comers, but nobody comes. Why is it we are ready to engage in two hours of argument, but no one will give us the time of day?

We need to consider the prior question of plausibility: *might* Christianity be true? Ought someone to consider it even briefly as an option?

To agree that something is plausible is to agree that it is worth serious consideration. If you're trying to determine why you have become sick, you will consider microbiology, the physiology of your immune system, hygiene, contact with others who have had the same sickness, and so on. If someone suggests the real reason you feel lousy is that you wear too much brown, and you should switch instead to summery pastels, you will think that person mad. You won't take the suggestion seriously for a second. It isn't plausible to you, and you won't take time to listen except, perhaps, for amusement.

Consider, however, that it is at least theoretically possible that you *are* sick precisely because you do wear too much brown! Perhaps brown clothes attract and dispel a certain combination of light waves that affect your body, as ultraviolet light affects your skin. Or, perhaps, most clothing manufacturers now use a popular, cheap brown dye that turns out to contain a mildly toxic substance, and prolonged wearing of brown leaches this substance into your skin. If you were to hear the argument presented in the language of science, you might take it seriously. The point is, though, it is likely you and I would never have the chance to hear all this evidence (the issue of credibility — is it true?) because we would have immediately dismissed the idea as preposterous (the issue of plausibility — it cannot be true).

In sum, most of our friends and family members who are not Christian believers probably won't sit still for a course in basic Christian doctrine or engage in an argument over Christian

evidences. So can we reach them any other way? The primary contemporary challenge for Christian witness today, therefore, is to help our neighbours slow down from their breezy dismissal of authentic Christian faith to consider that it might possibly be worth considering seriously after all. If we don't attend to this challenge, everything else we attempt will miss the mark. **R**

John Stackhouse will speak at the 1999 Trinity Conference on Monday, April 26, at Trinity Presbyterian Church, York Mills, Toronto (see advertisement).

John Stackhouse recently left the University of Manitoba, where he taught as a professor of religion, to serve at Regent College, Vancouver, as Sangwoo Youtong Chee professor of theology. His most recent book is *Can God Be Trusted? Faith and the Challenge of Evil* (Oxford University Press, 1998). This article was adapted with permission from his contribution to *Christian Apologetics in a Postmodern World*, edited by Timothy Phillips and Dennis Okholm (InterVarsity Press, 1995).



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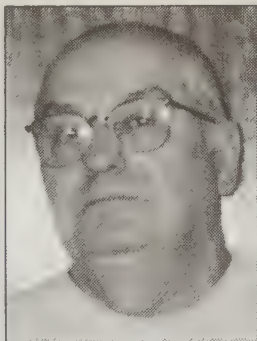
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Faces of Faith



Allan Young was born, raised and educated in Toronto. After leaving high school, he worked with General Foods, the Royal Canadian Air Force and Bell Canada. After 13 years at "The Bell," he became a Salvation Army officer, serving in Bells Corners, Ontario, and Verdun, Quebec. He left the Salvation Army to study at McGill University and The Presbyterian College in Montreal, and was ordained in 1979. Currently, Allan is the North Peace territorial missionary working with and out of Strang Presbyterian Church in Dixonville, Alberta. Allan and his wife, Jeanette, have been married 41 years. Their two children and four grandchildren live in Edmonton.

What is your earliest memory of church life?

Attending Melrose Park Presbyterian Church in Toronto for about six months near the end of the Second World War

What is your favourite hymn?

"Joyful, Joyful We Adore You"

What musical piece has most inspired you?

All jazz and classical music, especially Handel's *Messiah*

What is your favourite biblical book, and why?

John, because of the many word pictures of Jesus

What book (outside of the Bible) has most influenced you?

Many years ago, *Are You Running With Me, Jesus?* by Malcolm Boyd broadened my outlook regarding life and prayer.

Where do you find inspiration to sustain your faith?

In the Scriptures, the sacraments, the symbols and seasons of the church year, and God's creation

Who has played a major role in your faith journey?

My wife, Jeanette

How has God changed your life?

My faith in God has given me self-respect and respect for others and has enabled me to overcome being a physical abuser.

If you could invite anyone (past or present) to a dinner party, who would you invite?

Martin Luther King Jr.

What is your biggest regret?

Dropping out of high school after Grade 10

What has been your greatest joy in life?

Being ordained by the Presbytery of Quebec after appreciating and completing the educational requirements of The Presbyterian Church in Canada as a General Assembly student

What was your most embarrassing moment in church?

In a sermon, when referring to the "phylacteries" of the Pharisees (Matthew 23:5), I called them "prophylactics."

What do you find most irritating about The Presbyterian Church in Canada?

Sessions and congregations that insist they hired the minister to *do everything* for them

What one change in the church would make it substantially better?

Everyone realizing that the mission of the Church is *not* done only by the clergy but by *all Christians* living and working together, using their own abilities and gifts of the Holy Spirit

If you could live a second time, who would you like to be?

Myself, without making the same mistakes as the first time 'round

Write your own epitaph.

He enjoyed living out his faith.

Joe's Last Day

If nothing else,
he taught me rivers.
How they begin as nothing more
than the gurgle of a spring.
How they gather momentum
as they seek the lower ground.
How they swell with spring melt
and rain as they sprint
across the plains.
How they disappear in the delta.
How, unknown to us,
they make it to the sea.
With hand gripped hard around mine,
on the last day,
he told me only of that sea.

— John Grey

Christians Don't Have to Face



Mental Illness Alone

by Nan McKenzie Kosowan

Rev. Beth Hennessy makes her way through the coffee shop to a seat opposite the emotionally distraught young man with whom she has an appointment. She knows she is where God wants her.

In 1994, with degrees and experience in the ministry, social work and hospital chaplaincy behind her, she arrived in Kitchener, Ontario, from Peoria, Illinois, with husband Bill. He was called to pastor Doon Presbyterian Church in Kitchener. Bill and Beth agreed, "It's a good fit for us." Beth reiterated that sentiment

when she became the first "roving" chaplain of the Interchurch Chaplaincy Project (ICCP), a Mennonite mission to

Providing compassion and support for a group frequently neglected: Christians who suffer with mental and emotional illnesses

mentally and emotionally ill Christians.

The casual atmosphere of the coffee shop is what the young Christian man needs. In emotional and mental turmoil, he feels a stranger in his familiar church pew and fears the stigma of his illness in the eyes of other Christians who don't understand. Smiling encouragingly, listening intently and responding patiently, Beth Hennessy becomes a link to Christian compassion and support needed desperately by this often neglected group of Christians: those who suffer with mental and emotional illness.

This is Hennessy's pulpit, but she doesn't preach here. "This is a flexible, confidential situation. I'm 'Switzerland,' a neutral listener. I encourage them to talk about what's going on in their lives with as much comfort and as little pressure as possible, and without a long list of questions to throw at them. I don't have an agenda; it's whatever they want to talk about. I'm here to listen and, perhaps, help them process some things. I give them input if that's what they want, going with my gut feeling through the conversation. I don't simply sit quietly. I respond to what they are saying, make comments, ask questions."

An experienced mental health social worker, Beth gives feedback and, depending on the issue, sometimes asks point-blank: "Do you want to hear what I think or simply to unburden this?" They'll let me know. I'll be up-front if I see they need to see their doctor or therapist. I tell them I do not get into clinical therapy because I'm not a doctor."

An ordained pastor, offering pastoral friendship when asked, she will delve into spiritual issues people bring up. "Some people have hard spiritual issues to deal with, particularly around suffering. They ask the big question, 'Why is this happening to me?' They feel disconnected and want so much to feel closer to God."

Beth says she is no Bible-thumper. "But, if it comes up, we discuss how God's promises do not mean suffering will never occur. I share psalms that resonate with comfort, reminding us God is there not to judge but to walk with us through the despair and illness. It's hard for a Christian friend to listen to someone's pain and not want to 'fix it'; but we are to be there through their cycle of depression, assuring them that God cares, we care and they are not alone."

Interchurch Chaplaincy Project

ICCP came into existence four years ago in response to concerns of parents for their mentally ill adult children. First Mennonite, Hillcrest Mennonite, Kitchener Mennonite Brethren and Stirling Avenue Mennonite churches appointed Chaplain Hennessy and a volunteer steering committee of two people coping with mental illness along with pastors of

Right: Rev. Beth and Rev. Bill Hennessy with son Matthew at Doon Church, Kitchener, Ont.

Previous page: Rev. Beth Hennessy of the Interchurch Chaplaincy Project talks over coffee with Dave Weber, a mental illness survivor.



the partner churches. For four years, the ICCP annual budget of \$15,000 has provided 15 hours a week of chaplaincy ministry for 60 people with mental illness and their families, and for education in congregations. There are no user-fees. ICCP plans to introduce the project to other denominations.

Through its education project in congregations, ICCP looks at the marginalized folk whom Jesus touched and encourages Christians to get involved with today's marginalized people: those suffering mental illness. "It is a physically diagnosed biochemical disorder like no other illness because it bears a stigma," says Hennessy, whose father founded mental health associations in several communities where he pastored. "We explore how we can be Christ to one another and see Christ in one another,"

"A lot of what these folks are dealing with is the isolation of loneliness, and finding a quality of life," says Beth. "Interacting with others is important, but it can be difficult for someone in deep depression or troubled with delusions or psychotic thinking to be out among people. It's part of the illness."

The diagnosis of mental illness doesn't have to define life, she says. Key to finding ways to quality life and relationships beyond mental illness are the friendship circles ICCP promotes. Together, a parishioner with mental illness, the pastor and ICCP set up a group with four friends from within the church to help the parishioner survive times of crisis. ICCP sets the ground rules and provides the basic information on the illness of the patient. Then, the friends will know how to listen well and be aware if the person is heading into a downward spiral and needs to talk with a doctor.

From One Who's Been There

ICCP speaker and friendship circle participant Dave Weber knows his topic well. "All my life, I've felt some degree of cyclical manic depression," he says. At times, it hampered the enthusiasm and creativity he brought to his careers in industrial sales and engineering. "It's frustrating for loved ones, unable to help as manic depressives become unrealistic, unable to focus or follow through on all the really good ideas they get."



Guideposts

Celebrating Our Heritage

Right: St. Andrew's Church, Dawson City.

Below: Dr. Grant (far right) pictured with his party in Skagway, Alaska, on their five-month journey from Toronto to Dawson City in 1898.



Photos courtesy of Presbyterian Church Archives

Grant of the Yukon

When the Gold Rush took place at the turn of the century, our church was there in people such as Dr. Andrew S. Grant. Grant was both a medical doctor and an ordained minister. The first ordained minister in the Yukon, he became affectionately known as Grant of the Yukon. He built the first church (St. Andrew's, Dawson City), organized and founded the Good Samaritan Hospital and served as president of the Moral and Social Reform League.

Grant was a man of action. It was said of him that his favourite committee was composed of two members with the other member absent.

Although a devoted Presbyterian (he served as the secretary of the General Board of Missions from 1925 until his death in 1935), he always put his Christianity first. When a board member at a congregational meeting in St. Andrew's, Dawson City, declared there must be a drastic cut in expenditures or Grant might not be paid, he responded: "Take your money bags, you skinflint! Beat it out of here so we can operate as a Christian church!"

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If you have a passion for lay ministry and proven expertise in adult education, consider this half-time, contract position commencing September 1, 1999. Open to members of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Application deadline: April 30, 1999. For position description, contact: Mrs. Margaret McGillivray, 29 Sherwood Rise, Dundas, ON L9H 4E9; telephone (905) 627-3020; or check the Women in Ministry home page at www.presbycan.ca/wim.

In the early 1990s, 30 years after a one-time, one-year hospitalization, he "bottomed out" in a major crisis. He mistakenly chose to go off the medication that had helped him cope with cyclical bouts of depression for those 30 years. Growing depression pulled him lower and lower until he lost his job and self-esteem. He isolated himself from friends, family and church — a pattern typical of manic depression. Unable to pay rent, he was evicted and out on the street. Only then did he respond to his daughter's plea to call any time for help. With family help, he entered Kitchener's Friendship House (FH) hostel, then a FH recovery program called Cramer House and, finally, a second FH program, Eby Village. Here, support staff encourage residents to become self-reliant while befriending and sharing weekly activities with one another.

Through the crises, Weber's Christian faith grew as he recognized his condition and discovered the help available from family, friends and the ICCP and community programs. He now works two part-time jobs and hopes for a third, helping people with mental health issues, plowing back the help he has received.

While making presentations about his own experiences with mental illness, Weber welcomes comments and questions. "Questions are voiced by people having difficulties who may have never heard it talked about in church. Most in the congregation aren't aware these folks have had such difficulties. In many churches, mental illness either goes unrecognized or stays a deep, dark secret," he says. "Some congregations may be sensitive and learn about mental health, but most need to become informed. And survivors of mental illness need to take responsibility. They need to ask for help up-front. They need to say honestly: 'You may not know what I'm facing, but here's what's happening. Could you convene a small group to smother me with love right now? I need it, Brother; I need it, Sister.'" **R**

For more information about this program, contact: Rev. Beth Hennessy at (519) 748-2916.

Nan McKenzie Kosowan is a free-lance writer living in Kitchener, Ont.

Fighting Malaria

The mosquito net vs. the parasite

Designing a community development program which offers affordable, effective and appropriate solutions to diverse community problems is one of the many challenges our partners continually face. It requires understanding: the problem, the resources available to the community, and the complex relationships within a community. The following story illustrates how the Primary Health Care (PHC) Team of Ekwendeni Hospital (Church of Central Africa Presbyterian Synod of Livingstonia) in northern Malawi designed a malaria prevention program.

The Challenge: Malaria is one of the biggest health problems in Africa. It is the major cause of morbidity and mortality for young children and pregnant women in Malawi. Statistics from Ekwendeni Hospital reveal that malaria has been the most common cause of admission to the children's and women's wards for the past

four years. It is the most common problem encountered among all patients to the outpatient department. Traditional malaria control in Malawi has focused on early treatment. However, the emergence of resistant strains has spurred the search for alternative methods of control and prevention.

The Project Design: Trials in Kenya, Burkina Faso and Ghana have shown that bed nets, impregnated (dipped) every 6-12 months with pyrethroid insecticides can be an effective and cost efficient intervention leading to the prevention of malaria. The nets work at the most basic level by preventing the person from being bitten by the mosquito which carries the malaria



Mosquito nets help reduce the incidence of malaria.

Photo by Guy Smagghe, PWS&D

parasite, precisely when the mosquitoes are most active: from dusk to dawn. The studies showed that when used regularly the nets can reduce both the frequency of malaria and the level of infection in the mosquito population. Peoples' awareness of such nets in Malawi is limited, and their use even less so.

The PHC Team decided that community health workers and regular maternal-child health clinics could demonstrate the usefulness of the nets. A revolving fund could be set up to pay for the nets and insecticide. Proceeds from the sale of the nets would go back into the fund in order to buy more nets and insecticide (to treat more nets). Surveys would monitor the level of knowledge and the use of the nets in the community. Data from the hospital would help confirm the effect of the nets on levels of malaria.

Implementation: The PHC Team realized that if they were to encourage people in the communities to use the nets, they would have to use them themselves. So they furnished all the beds in the hospital children's ward with nets, and started using them in their own homes. (This had the added benefit of reducing the number of days that staff members were sick!) When parents brought their children to the hospital for

(Continued on page 3)

A View from Afar

Too often, the exchange between neighbours can be one sided. Canadians often visit projects and partners in the south, but few partners have the opportunity to visit Canada. PWS&D is dedicated to ensuring that our partners also visit Canada. Esther Lupafya of Malawi visited Canada to present a paper at the Canadian Public Health Conference in November 1998.

Her first time outside of Africa, Esther visited Ottawa, Toronto, St. Catharines, Niagara Falls, Cambridge, Listowel and St. Jacob's. A nurse with Ekwendeni Hospital's Primary Health care program, Esther worked for two days as a public health nurse and visited a shelter for the homeless in Toronto.



Esther Lupafya (right) AIDS Program Coordinator with the Primary Health Care Team of Ekwendeni Hospital.

Photo by Rachel Bezner Kerr

When Esther returned to Malawi she shared stories with her friends about "crazy Canadians" who constantly drink coffee wherever they go. "They always go to a place called *Tim's*—where they don't even get out of their cars to get the coffee; they talk to a machine and someone hands them coffee through a

(Continued on page 4)

The Year in Review: Emergency Relief

Floods. Wars. Hurricanes. Tidal Waves. Drought. The past year has been a difficult year as disasters—often caused or made worse by human action—have threatened food security in many regions that PWS&D has partners or contacts. While Hurricane Mitch has received the most attention, PWS&D has also been active in these areas:

Sudan: Civil war and drought in Sudan left nearly 2.6 million people on the brink of starvation. PWS&D supported the Mennonite Central Committee's food aid program to Southern Sudan.

Sierra Leone: Civil war in Sierra Leone also left food resources very insecure. PWS&D supported the Christian Reformed World Relief Canada's shipment of flour and canola oil to help the Sierra Leone Council of Churches support Northern rural communities affected by fighting.

Papua New Guinea: Through Action by Churches Together (ACT) PWS&D helped the Papua New Guinea's Council of Churches provide food, water, clothing and medicine to the victims of the tidal wave that hit its coast in July.

China: PWS&D helped the Amity Foundation provide food, clothes and medicines to people affected by severe flooding in China.

Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras: Even before Hurricane Mitch, PWS&D had supported drought affected regions of these countries. We are now actively working with partners in the region in food aid and rehabilitation efforts

North Korea: As famine has continued in North Korea, PWS&D continues to act as the lead agency for Canadian Foodgrains Bank shipments.

Nigeria PWS&D supported the Presbyterian Church in Nigeria's efforts to help people reconstruct houses after several people were killed and homes were destroyed in the land dispute war between Inyimagu and Igbudu communities.

Kenya When the bombing of the American Embassy shook Kenya, PWS&D supported the Presbyterian Church of East Africa's efforts in counseling and orphan care.

PWSDevelopments

is an educational resource produced twice a year by Presbyterian World Service & Development with financial support from the Canadian International Development Agency. For more information, to order more copies, or be placed on a standing order, contact PWS&D at:

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North York, ON M3C 1J7
tel: (416) 441-1111 or
1-800-619-7301

fax: (416) 441-2825

e-mail: pwsd@presbyterian.ca

web site: <http://www.presbyterian.ca/lifemission/pwsd/>

A Return to Eastern Europe

As an agency which began with emergency relief to European countries after World War II, PWS&D found itself drawn back into the region when severe flooding devastated a large section of the Trans-carpathian Basin of the Ukraine in November 1998.

Exacerbated by many years of deforestation, the floods spread quickly and caught many by surprise. In a region already facing severe

economic problems, the farming

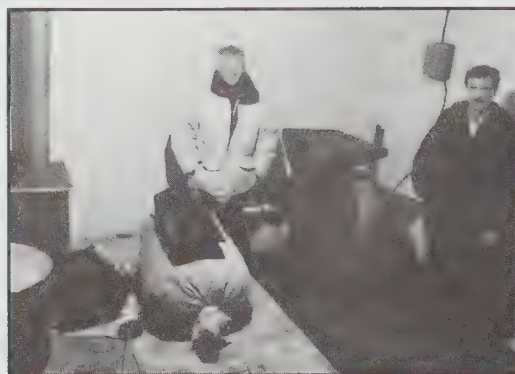
communities faced a long winter having lost their homes, winter food reserves, livestock, feed stocks and seed for next season's planting. PWS&D was able to respond immediately with a grant to *Action by Churches Together*, allowing Hungarian Interchurch Aid to provide food, water purification tablets, and medical assistance to the region. PWS&D is currently supporting the Reformed Church of Sub-Carpathian Ukraine as they purchase local material and organize local labour to rebuild.

In December PWS&D supported the first congregational initiatives to the region. Thornhill Presbyterian is helping the Reformed Church secondary school in Tivadarfalva, Ukraine establish a vegetable oil press. This project is producing affordable vegetable oil, pressed from local crops, particularly sunflower seeds. It will provide a financial base for a secondary school while creating jobs and providing a service for farmers and affordable oil for local consumption. An additional by-product of the press are the shells of the pressed seed, which can be used as nutritious animal feed.

First Hungarian Church, Toronto is supporting similar work in Romania, by helping the Reformed Church of Kohalom purchase tools (lathe, drill press, milling machine) for a workshop at a school for disadvantaged children. In addition to teaching the students, the shop will provide much-needed goods to the community, while providing a source of income for the school.



Flood damage left many facing a difficult winter.



A vegetable press provides an income for a school and a service for a community

PWS&D Director Rick Fee visited churches in Hungary, Romania and the Ukraine to assess the situation in February 1999. He found many communities battling a bitterly cold winter with little supplies and the food shelves of many of the stores were bare.

Hurricane Mitch's impact on development



supplies for the communities in which they work. They did so in the same spirit of development, working together to overcome obstacles, incorporating the people in the planning and implementing of the work, and using local resources as much as they could.

In a few days Hurricane Mitch killed over 10,000 people and displaced over 100,000. It hit a region already struggling with abject poverty. Mitch struck a region where PWS&D already had a number of partners working in long term development.

When the hurricane hit, our partners work turned to emergency relief: finding food, shelter and medical

Now, as many talk of rebuilding, our partners are asking: how will we rebuild? Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras, were already some of the poorest countries in the world. Our partners want to ensure rehabilitation efforts are part of sustainable development, where all people can work, have food on their tables, go to school, and have access to health care.

"Nicaraguans are appreciative of the international response to the disaster, but one can't help but wonder what the international community has in mind when they promise to "reconstruct Central America." According to whose criteria? Perhaps now is an opportunity for the poor, always the most severely affected to speak out, and demand a *sustainable* development. The problem is that now, more than ever, they're too busy just trying to survive."

—Denise van Wissen,

International Ministries staff working with Soynica, a partner supported by PWS&D

Over \$600,000 has been donated to PWS&D to help support the relief and sustainable rehabilitation efforts of our partners.

A Simple Plan: Mosquito nets vs. Malaria

(continued from page 1)

care, they learned about the use of nets. Using the hospital as an example, the PHC team also included information about the nets in the training and refresher courses for community health volunteers and began educational sessions for women at regular maternal-child health clinics.

An Ekwendeni Community Health Nurse, Ms. Grace Chavula, was hired to coordinate the program and she has thrown herself wholeheartedly into her work, evidenced by the name she gave to her first born daughter. Her beautiful baby daughter, born in May 1998, is called "Permethrin", the name of the most common insecticide used to treat the bed nets!

As the message got out, the PHC Team soon found their greatest challenge was ensuring they could supply sufficient nets and insecticide to meet the demand. At their first sale in the community of Embombeni in April 1998, 400 nets were sold. There are no manufacturers of bed nets in Malawi, so nets have to be purchased from other countries, mainly South Africa and Kenya. Much effort is required to transport, clear customs, and obtain official documents in order to import the nets duty free. Still, within a year, a total of over 2000 "treated" nets have been sold. People who do not have ready access to cash are able to contribute an equivalent amount of maize (corn) from their harvest in order to "purchase" a net. This maize is stored in the local Community Grain Bank for sale and distribution to community members during times of food shortage. (This is an example of another complementary Ekwendeni PHC Program that is addressing the widespread problem of "food insecurity" in the region.) Slowly the program is overcoming the challenges. It has been widely accepted by community members and soon the health care workers hope to see the long term impact of the nets in their clinics and hospitals.

The Primary Health Care unit of the Ekwendeni Hospital is an example of the unique relationship between PWS&D and International Ministries. IM staff Dr. Mark Young has helped develop and support the Primary Health Care Activities at the Livingstonia Synod Health Units. Your contributions to PWS&D support the program with a grant of \$14,000.



Primary Health Care Team surveys Embombeni

photo by: Rachel Bezner Kerr

A Malawian's Impressions of Canada

(continued from page 1)

window." She was astounded by skating—which required wearing a special shoe with a knife attached to the bottom of it and sliding along on ice. She was appalled at the way Canadians treat dogs; "they treat them just as if they were their children!. They even give them special food of their own, which people buy for them at a special store! And here in Malawi there are children dying of malnutrition; they feed their dogs better than our children". Here are some more of her reflections:

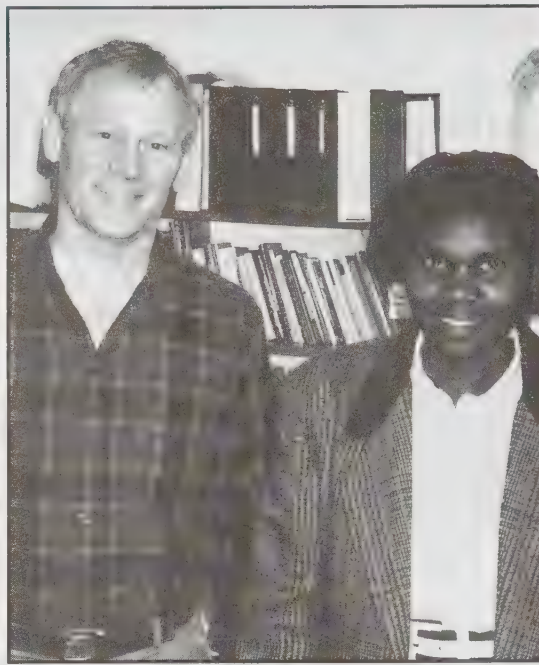
This visit impressed upon me that Canada is a very rich country and Malawi is a very poor country. We differ even in natural resources—you have lots of water—we have shortage of water. Canada has nice houses, roads, bridges, cars and food. Malawi has poor roads, houses, bridges, medical care, poor education and food insecurity. I was told that the street people have no help—but there were soup kitchens. In Malawi children die of malnutrition because there is no alternative.

What I want to say is that the world is not the same. The difference is something that I for one fail to understand and accept. I blame nobody, but I only say, I wish we were given a chance to choose where we wanted to be born so that I, Esther, could not regret to be a Malawian because it was my choice.

I thank God for giving me this chance to come to Canada. I have seen things I never thought existed in the world—Niagara Falls, the five great lakes, the technology that people have in Canada. I met some people who said they don't believe in God. I had a good talk with them and I told them the truth about life. This made me remember Proverbs 30:7-9

*"Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that I need,
or I shall be full and deny you, and say. Who is the Lord?
or I shall be poor and steal, and profane the name of my God."*

Sometimes things can look very different through the eyes of another. For three weeks Esther visited Canada—tasted the food, saw the sights, experienced culture shock. She reminds us what a rich country we live in, and makes us wonder why there is poverty here. Esther's commitment and dedication to working with the poor in Malawi was evident to those who met her. We pray Esther realizes how much she—a woman from a very rural area in the "poor" country of Malawi—has taught many people from the "rich" country Canada.



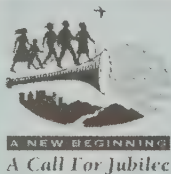
Esther Lupafya meets PWS&D Director Rick Fee

Photo by Karen Plater, PWS&D

DID YOU KNOW?

The following is a list of the 50 highly indebted countries, which the Jubilee Initiative urges a release from debt. The Presbyterian Church in Canada has staff or supports projects in the countries in green..

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Bolivia
Burkina Faso
Burundi
Cameroon
Central African Republic
Chad
Congo
Côte d'Ivoire
Equatorial Guinea
Ethiopia
The Gambia
Ghana
Guinea
Guinea-Bissau
Guyana
Haiti
Honduras
Jamaica
Kenya
Laos
Liberia
Madagascar
Malawi
Mali
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Morocco
Mozambique
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Nicaragua
Niger
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Peru
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Rwanda
Sao Tome & Principe
Senegal
Sierra Leone
Somalia
Sudan
Tanzania
Togo
Uganda
Vietnam
Yemen
Zaire
Zambia
Zimbabwe



As the we approach the third millennium, it may seem that we are far removed from the time of Jesus or Leviticus. Our scientific and technological advances in the past 50—let alone 2000 years—have been staggering. Yet, we are still faced with the same problems that Jesus faced: unjust working conditions, poverty and debt. As jubilee people, Canadian churches are working together to calling for 2000 to be a year for jubilee. Internationally we

are joining in on the Jubilee 2000 Debt Petition Campaign. Circulate the petition as broadly as possible in your churches, communities, homes, and schools. Return it by April 1, 1999 to the Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative PO Box 772. Toronto, ON M4Y 2N6.

Get a copy of the petition from the website: www.web.net/~jubilee or by contacting PWS&D.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Millennium / 125th / Jubilee

Celebrate!



Do you remember the centennial celebrations of our denomination in 1974-75? For some of us, it seems they happened only yesterday. For others, the celebrations of a quarter-century ago are unknown or a vague blur.

Presbyterians ignore their heritage at their peril. The 125th anniversary celebrations will begin with the General Assembly in Kitchener, Ontario, June 1999, and continue through the following 18 months. Recognizing its mandate to preserve and publicize our history as the people of God, the Committee on History is undertaking several initiatives.

Canadian Presbyterian Bibliography

A comprehensive index of books, articles and papers on Canadian Presbyterianism has been prepared and will be available on disk in June 1999. This is the result of years of painstaking research in archives and libraries by Professor John Moir, author of the 1975 volume *Enduring Witness*. Eighteen chapters subdivide the material into such areas as "Church and the Arts," "Mission," "Labour," "Biographies," "Regional Histories," "Practice" and "Pastoral Care." By publishing on disk rather than printing, the committee believes future additions can be incorporated more easily into the index and at minimal cost.

Presbyterian Women

Twenty Canadian Presbyterian women, each recognized for her contribution to church and society in specific areas of service, compose the contents of a biographical volume to be published this year. They represent politics, education, business, home and overseas mission, ecumenism and administration. These women, who are or were living in the second half of the 20th century, can serve as role models for today's youth.

Called to Witness, Vol. IV

Continuing the committee's 25-year policy of publishing biographies of noteworthy Presbyterians, Volume Four in the series will be available this fall. Pioneer Presbyterians such as George Munro Grant the "fervent nationalist," Daniel Coursirat the father of French evangelization and Charlotte Geddie of the

South Seas are interspersed with contemporaries such as Allan Farris of Knox College. Photographs are included in this edition. As with the 1999 volume on women, writers have been commissioned for their interest and expertise. All readily undertook their assignments without remuneration.

National Presbyterian Museum

The committee's most important 125th anniversary project is the opening of the National Presbyterian Museum in

Toronto. Here, church artifacts will be preserved and displayed for future generations. Brochures requesting artifacts and financial gifts have been distributed to every congregation in the church and articles have appeared in the *Presbyterian Record* and in newspapers across Canada.

To date, the committee has been overwhelmed by materials received. Exhibits will include a congregational library and 19th-century minister's study, one of the largest Communion token collections in

the world, sacramental vessels, furnishings from a century-old church, overseas missions, youth, etc.

Financial gifts, however, are being received more slowly. Donations to date exceed \$30,000. But this must be doubled or tripled in order to renovate the facilities and prepare the site with air-conditioning and fire and theft protection. No money is allocated from national church funds, so the museum is dependent upon donations. Congregations and individuals should send cheques to: The Presbyterian Church in Canada — National Museum, c/o Presbyterian Church Chief Financial Officer, 50 Wynford Drive, North York, Ont. M3C 1J7.

Exposure Tours

A highlight of the 125th anniversary celebrations is the opportunity to explore the historical roots of our denomination. Three 16-day exposure tours in 1999-2000 are being arranged by the Committee on History. Brochures are available from Rostad Tours (see advertisement in the *Record*) or the Committee on History, 183 Chedoke Ave., Hamilton, Ont. L8P 4P2, Tel. 905-528-2730, Fax 905-526-8697; E-mail: drjohna.johnston@simpatico.ca. **R**

The End of Presbyterianism

by Joseph C. McLelland

Aspectre is haunting The Presbyterian Church in Canada. In Quebec, it's creeping congregationalism; in Ontario, over-centralization; in general, it's a decline in our "Presbyterian distinctives" in doctrine and polity and ethos.

The Ontario syndrome is easiest to explain, if ominous: our "Presbyterian heartland" is narrowing. Too many Presbyterians live in too small an area of our vast country. At last count, Ontario has some 70 per cent, with 15 per cent to its east and 15 per cent west. When I visit the centre, I'm struck by the difference in attitude that results from belonging to a group with significant numbers. In both East and West, meanwhile, the tradition Allan Farris used to cherish (the "great pulpits" in major cities across Canada) has vanished. Preaching is no longer the social and moral force it once was, not to mention ecclesiastical.

What's the significance of this population imbalance of our little denomination — a mere 2.4 per cent of Canada's population? That depends on what we think we're supposed to be doing, even "we few, we happy few." We're almost down to the 144,000 saints of Revelation 7:4. If we reach that apocalyptic number by 2000, will anything happen?

By "end," I have the word's two meanings in mind. One is "finish," as if declining numbers portend ultimate disappearance. But the other is "purpose," the goal at which we aim. Now, every church aims not at an eternal church but at the coming of God's Kingdom when the church will fulfil its mission and worship: that will be its "end" in both senses. Therefore, forms of church government and liturgy and so on are temporary, to be altered as our goal becomes clearer or shifts.

Maybe the creeping congregationalism I detect has a message. I note that traditional obedience to our ordination vows, for instance, seems to have gone. While I don't understand this, I see that my generation took the authority of church courts more seriously than is now the case. What I view as following a divisive course, others — both teaching and ruling elders — see as reflecting "individual conscience." This suits the contemporary mind which distrusts "procedure" as if it is contrary to "pastoral care." Yet, in my own reading and experience of Presbyterian order, I know of no case where people

Remember the old cliché, "Let the world set the agenda for the church"? It's coming true!

have been harmed by following proper procedure (ensuring "natural justice"); but there are many who have been sacrificed to bad process, including some in my own presbytery of late.

By "Presbyterian distinctives," I don't mean

old chestnuts such as predestination. We're now too theologically illiterate to appreciate the debates of our forebears or to recast them for today. Anyway, most would be on the wrong side — Pelagian rather than Augustinian, for instance. If we continue to downplay scriptural and doctrinal authority, as is current in theological education and church worship, we'll replace our purpose as Reformed Christians with merely trying to serve the spirit of the age. (Remember the old cliché, "Let the world set the agenda for the church"? It's coming true!)

Little regret is shown at following society's values and dis-values rather than seeking biblical and theological reasons. The sexual revolution of the '60s is one obvious source of the fall-out of permissiveness and relativism. "Freedom" becomes not *liberty* to choose the true and good and beautiful, but *licence* to do what

we please. Did Assembly give a sign in the way it set up the special committee to guide us through the debate on homosexuality for the next four years? It may be "representative" of the interest groups, but doesn't this mean the Committee on Doctrine is no longer the logical initiator for discussion of major issues?

What began 500 years ago as a positive and elegant system of doctrine and worship and governance, distinct from medieval forms of the same, has now settled for a rather indistinct type of "spirituality" and "faith journeys." I don't mind if we modify our system so that our traditional "courts" become less judicial and more pastoral — a permanent judicial commission, for example, would free presbyteries and Assemblies to develop into the feel-good rallies they're trying to become. And, of course, we should move with the times in creative uses of technology and new ideas. But unless these improve what we have inherited, unless they "reform" rather than merely tinker because we're running scared, they will not affect the problems of dwindling and aging congregations for which they're supposedly the cure.

To re-form is to acknowledge our roots (our "radical" base) and build on scriptural and theological sources. If this runs counter to our culture, that's probably a sign we're doing things right — in proper "order" even if not always "decently." **R**

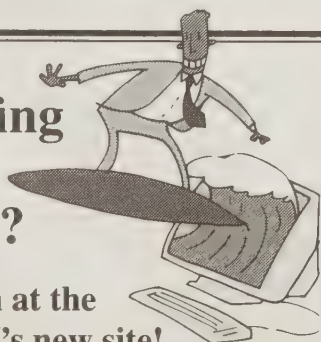
Joseph C. McLelland is emeritus professor of McGill University and The Presbyterian College, Montreal, and a contributing editor of this magazine.

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Millennium, with Glen Soderholm; Renewal Issues, with Calvin Brown and
Bob Birse. The Annual General Meeting for The Renewal Fellowship will be
held at 1 p.m. during the lunch period.

Volunteering and Religious Commitment

by Jan and Frank Jones

Christians express their love and concern for others through volunteering, a strongly fostered value in the Christian tradition. So, when we examined the influence of religious commitment on the decision to become a volunteer, we expected those affiliated with a religious denomination would be more likely to be volunteers than those with no religious affiliation. Data from Statistics Canada's 1987 *Survey of Volunteer Activity*, summarized in Table 1, shows this to be true.

This was generally true even for denominational members who considered themselves "not very religious." Table 1 shows only the Roman Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, Presbyterians

Statistics confirm that people of faith provide the bulk of volunteers in our society

and Lutherans who were "not very religious" were less involved in volunteering than the "no religion" group, and the difference was small.

We also expected people within a denomination who considered themselves to be either "very religious" or "fairly religious" would more likely volunteer than those "not very religious." This was true without exception. In some denominations, the difference was very noticeable; for example, 25 per cent for Baptists and 21 per cent for Presbyterians. Also, in every denomination except Eastern Orthodox, we found that those who were "very religious" were more likely to volunteer than those who were "fairly religious."

Table 1. Per Cent Volunteering in Different Faith Communities, Canada, 1987

How religious do you consider yourself to be?

Religion	Very/Fairly (per cent volunteering)	Not very
Roman Catholic	24.8	17.4
Anglican	38.4	26.6
United Church	41.7	27.1
Presbyterian	39.6	19.1
Lutheran	33.5	19.4
Baptist	43.4	20.3
Eastern Orthodox	—*	17.6
Jewish	33.0	30.6
Other	41.2	25.6

Note: 19.5 per cent of those expressing no religious affiliation were volunteers.

*Estimate has high sampling variability.

Source: Statistics Canada's *Survey of Volunteer Activity*, 1987.

Table 2. Volunteers who say they are very or fairly religious, expressed as a percentage of all volunteers, Presbyterians and other Canadians, 1987

Type of volunteer activity	Very/Fairly religious Presbyterians Other Canadians (per cent of all volunteers)	
All types	74.6	64.4
Provide care, support	81.3	73.7
Food or other goods duty	81.3	75.8
Board member, committee work	79.8	65.8
Consulting, office work	79.3	63.7
Teaching or coaching	75.5	64.0
Driving	75.0	66.4
Organizing, supervising	74.0	64.0
Canvassing, campaigning	71.2	65.7
Educating, lobbying	71.4	63.4
First aid, fire-fighting	—*	59.4
Wildlife, environment	—*	61.6
Self-help groups	—*	65.3
Other activities	—*	66.0

*Estimate has high sampling variability.

Source: Statistics Canada's *Survey of Volunteer Activity*, 1987.

Again, we expected the involvement in volunteering would vary by denomination, owing to differences in teaching, emphasis, encouragement and support among faith communities. This was also true. Presbyterians in the survey who were very or fairly religious were highly involved as were United Church members, Anglicans, Baptists and members of other religions: all in the 40 per cent range. Of the "not very religious" Presbyterians, only 19 per cent volunteered compared with a high of 32 per cent for "not very religious" Jews and a low of 17 per cent for "not very religious" Roman Catholics.

Presbyterians were involved in many volunteer activities. For each of these activities, we expected a higher percentage of the very or fairly religious Presbyterians would be involved in the activity compared with the corresponding percentage for all Presbyterians. This expectation was confirmed without exception. Overall, the 59 per cent of Presbyterians who described themselves as very or fairly religious provided 75 per cent of all Presbyterian volunteers (Table 2). They provided over 80 per cent of the volunteers in caring or support activities and food preparation or serving activities. Close to 80 per cent of

Living Faith

We serve and love God
by the service and love of creation
especially the care of the needy.
Every kind of work
that is honest and serves others
is a vocation from the Lord.

Calling means the necessity
to deny selfish ambition and desire
in order to minister to others.
In God's service true freedom is to be found.

— *Living Faith* 2.3.2, 2.3.3

the volunteers worked as board members or did committee work, and a similar percentage did office work, consulting or administrative duties. Even in the activities in which they were less involved, the very or fairly religious Presbyterians still provided a larger percentage of volunteers; for example, over 70 per cent of those canvassing, campaigning or volunteer driving.

Of non-Presbyterians in Canada, a slightly smaller percentage said they were very or fairly religious: 56 per cent compared with 59 per cent of Presbyterians. However, this 56 per cent provided a larger share of volun-

teers, more than 64 per cent overall (Table 2). Again, the margin of difference was widest in the case of care or support, and food preparation or serving activities: the 56 per cent of other Canadians who were very or fairly religious provided well over 70 per cent of the volunteers involved in these activities.

Analytical Results of Interest

We conducted an analysis to predict whether or not a Presbyterian was volunteering in each kind of volunteer activity listed in Table 2, and in any kind of volunteering. Two of the



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most important predictors of volunteerism were being "very religious" and "fairly religious." Another important predictor was how busy one perceived oneself to be. Busier Presbyterians were more likely to be volunteers. Another important influence was the frequency of informal volunteering rather than through a volunteer organization. The more often Presbyterians volunteered on an informal basis, the more likely they were to be volunteers. Unfortunately, we did not have the data needed to test whether or not home responsibilities were sacrificed in order to volunteer. Other statistically significant results of the analysis were, in decreasing order:

- women were more likely to be volunteers than men
- home owners were more likely to be volunteers than non-home owners
- those "very satisfied" with their standard of living were more likely to be volunteers than those "somewhat satisfied" or "dissatisfied"
- those describing their health as good were more likely to be volunteers than those who described their health as either fair or poor.

The age range, education level, income group, region of residence, and whether or not one lived in a metropolitan area were less important predictors. **R**

Jan and Frank Jones attend St. Martin's Anglican Church, Ottawa.

Sunset

The moment the sun sets —
 not darkness,
 but that exact moment

when the intensity
 of light is suddenly
 gone from the sky —

at that very moment
 birds cry out over the river
 as if calling to say

that even we might
 discover something
 amazing

come evening,
 if we'd listen,
 if we'd pay attention.

— Michael S. Glaser

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FROM THE MODERATOR

(Continued from page 4)

a marvellous job in feeding, educating and caring for almost a thousand AIDS orphans.

We also visited the Naming'azi Farm Training Centre developed by David and Miriam Barrie (volunteer missionaries of our church), the Mulanje Mission Hospital and the Theological College in Zomba — all are doing excellent work. St. Michael's and All Angels, the beautiful Blantyre church designed and built by Rev. David Scott, a Church of Scotland missionary, left an unforgettable impression. Rev. Glenn Inglis, synod program director of Church and Society, and his wife, Linda, are offering splendid service, as is Clara Henderson, the synod's music consultant.

Accompanied by the Moderator of the Synod of Livingstonia, we visited the renowned Livingstonia mission station in the north, ascending to it by a steep, winding and precipitous road. There, we visited the famous school founded for training teachers, pastors, health workers and skilled crafts workers. We toured the large church with a Livingstone memorial window and the hospital that desperately needs a volunteer doctor. **(Is there a Canadian doctor who will answer this call?)** The influence of Dr. Robert Laws, an ordained Scottish missionary doctor who went with the Livingstonia pioneers in 1875 and directed the work for the next 52 years, is evident and is another example of eminent Christian missionary service. He recruited David Kaunda, a pioneer preacher in Zambia and father of its first president, Kenneth Kaunda.

We were privileged to visit the Ekwendeni Hospital and to witness the fine work Dr. Mark Young is doing as supervisor of primary health care. This includes nutrition and feeding programs for children, a malaria control program using mosquito bed nets for children and pregnant women, and an AIDS control program in which Pamela Young is involved. On the Sunday, I preached to a packed St. Andrew's congregation of 600 in Mzuza. We were chauffeured about by Rev. Heather Jones, schools chaplain for the synod. Two engineering

graduates, Bruce Hickling from Woodbridge Church in Ontario and Kevin Savage from Morningside-High Park, Toronto, are working as volunteers, the former in the building program and the latter in a clean water program.

Kenya

The East Africa Scottish Mission, combining religious, medical, educational and industrial work in a pattern inspired by the example of Malawi, was established in 1891. Rev. David Clement Scott, the outstanding figure of the Blantyre mission, came in 1901 to lead the mission in Kikuyu. He built a beautiful church in the Scottish architectural style. Dr. Rick Allen, acting health co-ordinator, a missionary of our church, works out of the Kikuyu mission where there is a hospital, a pastoral institute and the first phase of a Presbyterian university. Allen gives skilled direction to a large church-wide HIV/AIDS preventive program and is a health consultant.

As guests of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, we visited a number of superb projects funded by PWS&D — including a business school for secretaries, a pottery and weaving project in Eastleigh in Nairobi, a Maasai women's beadwork project in Maasai country, the Hawa project for Nairobi street boys initiated by Rev. Catherine Chalin, the Biberione Health Centre, St. Paul's Theological College in Limuru where two Kenyans who studied at McGill now teach, and Tumutumu Hospital near Mt. Kenya where George Loom of the Town of Mount Royal volunteers in the hospital. We also visited the offices of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa and the Africa Council of Churches where I led in worship and preached.

Zimbabwe

Our visit to Zimbabwe included several pleasant and informative days at the Eighth Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Harare. Yet, the highlight was a boat trip on the Zambesi River, explored by Livingstone, and a view of the majestic Victoria Falls which he named in honour of Queen Victoria. It was there

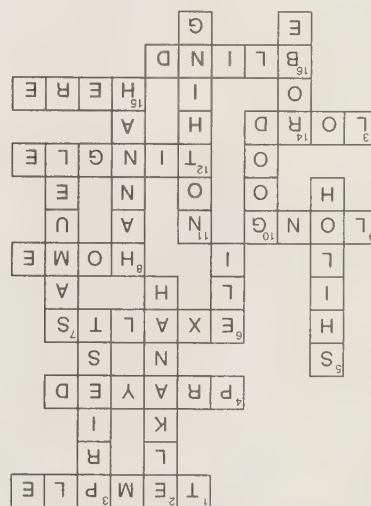
we saw the famous statue of Livingstone overlooking the falls.

The Presbyterian Church of East Africa and the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian are both vital, growing churches. It is our church's privilege to be their mission partner. Despite gigantic problems, such as the lack of finances, massive government debts, poverty, inadequate health care and the AIDS epidemic, these churches are making a strong evangelistic and courageous social witness. Did not Livingstone write: "It is true that missionaries have difficulties to encounter; but what great enterprise was ever accomplished without difficulty?"

We can be proud of and grateful for our missionaries and volunteers and the work they are doing in partnership with these churches. Through our support of Presbyterians Sharing... and PWS&D, the great missionary task that David Livingstone began continues. *Soli Deo Gloria.*

Bice Klempa

Answers to "A Child's Way" crossword puzzle (page 50).



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YOU WERE ASKING?

Tony Plomp



Respecting Your Elders

Is it legal for duly ordained elders who are retired, on leave or who have transferred from another congregation to serve in the tasks of elders outside the session, such as overseeing an elder's district or serving at Communion?

First, a comment about the elder who has transferred from another congregation. Although it is true an elder is ordained for life, his or her membership in session is not automatically transferable from one congregation to another. Such a person needs to be elected by the congregation of which he or she is now a member and called to active duty on its session. Unless so called to service, I would think it illegal for that person to serve in tasks specifically assigned to members of the session. Overseeing an elder's district is one of them. After all, an elder who has a district and is accountable to session for the pastoral care of the membership may need to consult *in camera* with other members of session, and so forth.

Next, we should take retirement from the obligations and privileges of eldership seriously. When an elder retires from active duty, that person is no longer an active elder serving on session. Having second thoughts after retiring, the elder may allow his or her name to stand again for nomination and be elected once again to active service. But a retired elder is no longer on the session and cannot serve in tasks legally assigned to members of session. Overseeing an elder's district is one of them. We should allow those who are retired from active duty to enjoy their retirement. Mind you, there is always lots of other work such a person can do in the congregation.

Now, we look at the person who asks for a sabbatical or a leave of absence for a year or two. That is certainly possible; but, once again, we should take such decisions by individuals seriously and give them the true leave they have sought. Once off the active roll of session, even if only for a time, such a person should not be given tasks to do that are specifically assigned to members of session. Why grant leave to such a person and then use him or her by the "back door"? The elder who is on leave should not only be on leave from meetings (and who doesn't enjoy being on leave from meetings?) but from all the duties that fall to being an elder.

Can any of these people assist in serving Communion? My view may be somewhat controversial and may appear to contradict the above. Serving Communion is, traditionally, a task assigned to the session, but need not be exclusively so at all times and under all circumstances. After all, once the elders have placed the Communion plate or tray into the hands of the people in the pew, we serve each other. I recall one service where, for a number of reasons, we found ourselves without the requisite number of elders to serve Communion efficiently. We called upon a retired elder to help us out, as well as a professing member of the church who served in another leadership capacity in the congregation. It worked out fine, and no one complained. So, normally, session members assist in serving Communion. In my view, however, exceptions can be made in this matter. **R**

Please send questions to Rev. Tony Plomp, 4020 Lancelot Dr., Richmond, B.C. V7C 4S3 or e-mail: TONY_PLOMP@bc.sympatico.ca. Include your name and address for information.

PCC News

Presbyterian minister honoured by South Korean government

Rev. Grace Myung Chun Kim of Toronto has been officially selected by the South Korean Consulate as the most outstanding citizen who has impacted Canadian society in a positive way. At a ceremony held at the South Korean Consulate in Toronto on January 12, Consul General Dae Won Park presented Grace with the Blue House Award. (The Blue House is the South Korean equivalent to the White House.)

The award bore the signature of South Korean President Dae Jung Kim.

Grace Kim is the founder and director of Korean-Canadian Family Ministries (KCFM), a ministry to seniors in the Toronto area. She has approximately 100 volunteers working with her in reaching as many as 3,000 seniors a week. KCFM is supported by Presbyterians Sharing..., the Presbytery of Eastern Han-Ca, Korean churches and individuals.



South Korean Consul General Dae Won Park presents the Blue House Award to Rev. Grace Kim. (In the background is a portrait of President Dae Jung Kim.)

Presbyterians increase their sharing

Annamarie Klassen, associate secretary for stewardship, the Life and Mission Agency, has announced that donations from congregations to Presbyterians Sharing... for 1998 totalled \$8,585,000, an increase of \$91,000 over 1997. "I want to extend a warm thank-you to the many Canadian Presbyterians for their continued faithful support of the mission and ministries of our church," said Klassen. "God has richly blessed us."

New associate secretary for worship and evangelism

Rev. James Czegledi began his new duties as associate secretary for worship, evangelism and church growth, Life and Mission Agency, on February 1. He replaces Rev. Judee Archer Green.

Czegledi comes to the church offices after having been the minister of St. Andrew's Church, Whitby, Ontario, since 1995. Over the past three years, St. Andrew's has experienced a growth of over 30 per cent. Prior to that, he was minister of Knollwood Park Church, London, Ontario, and associate minister of Orillia Church, Orillia, Ontario. He holds a Doctor of Ministry degree from Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, where his doctoral thesis focused on "Reaching Out to the Baby Boom Generation."

Trust fund to support theological education

Provisions in the wills of the late Dr. W. Stanford Reid and his wife, Priscilla, have resulted in the establishment of a substantial trust fund for the support of Reformed and Presbyterian theological education in Canada. The fund, to be known as the Priscilla and Stanford Reid Trust, will entertain applications from individuals, congregations, organizations and institutions for the purpose of promoting lectures, conferences, publications and other pro-

grams and projects that satisfy the objectives of the trust. Applications from individuals for scholarships to support programs of theological education and research will also be invited.

Stanford Reid was an ordained minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, but his career was substantially directed toward academic research and teaching. He taught history at McGill University in Montreal from 1941 to 1965 and, latterly, at the University of

Guelph (Ontario) where he was founding chair of the Department of History in 1965. His published historical research focused on the Reformation and included a popular biography of John Knox entitled *Trumpeter of God*. Although formally retired, he engaged in theological and historical writing and research until his death on December 28, 1996. Priscilla Reid died on June 2, 1997.

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NEWS

Other News

St. Andrew's Hall resident hopes to "soar on wings like eagles"

Six years ago, Stephanie McClellan was on her way to the University of Guelph with her mind set on an education degree. Her plan was to become a physical education teacher for the deaf. After her first year at university, McClellan's life changed drastically. She devel-

more opportunities to advocate for people with disabilities. That led her to Vancouver, where she is currently studying for a Masters of Divinity degree at Regent College and candidacy in the ordained ministry of the United Church.

While attending Regent, McClellan

lives and works as a community co-ordinator at St. Andrew's Hall, a college of The Presbyterian Church in Canada at the University of British Columbia. The support and sponsorship of the staff and board of St. Andrew's has been instrumental in making her newest dream a reality.

On May 30, 1999, McClellan will leave Vancouver on a hand-propelled three-wheeled bicycle.



Stephanie McClellan aboard her "eagle."

oped sudden adult onset rheumatoid arthritis and fibromyalgia. Within a week, she went from being an able-bodied athlete to needing assistance in every area of daily life.

After seven months of undiagnosed pain and immobilization, McClellan was admitted to the Rheumatic Disease Unit of Chedoke-McMaster Hospital in Hamilton, Ontario, where she spent five months relearning basic life skills — dressing, tying her shoes, walking. Strengthened by the prayers and visits of friends and family, McClellan found personal encouragement in the words of Isaiah: "Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength, They will soar on wings like eagles." It was then she began to feel a calling to hospital chaplaincy.

After leaving the hospital, McClellan reintegrated herself into university life. Through her involvement in wheelchair sports and her work at the Centre for Students with Disabilities, she began to see

Some three months later, she plans to arrive in Ottawa. Along the way, she hopes to increase awareness of the unique contributions people with disabilities can make to their communities. To this end, she would like to hold a workshop each night.

McClellan's goal is not to raise money as a legacy fund but, rather, to inspire churches to raise funds within their congregations to support people in their communities. She is, however, hoping for donations to help pay for the trip, with a significant proportion to be covered through "in-kind" gifts. Through the sponsorship of St. Andrew's Hall, a charitable number is available for tax receipts.

Information on Stephanie McClellan's "On Wings Like Eagles Tour" can be obtained by e-mail: smcclell@interchange.ubc.ca, or from the tour's office at 1103 Haist Street, Fonthill, Ontario L0S 1E2, or from the Web site at www.pz.com/on-eagles-wings.

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Corrupt public officials face expulsion from Nigerian churches

Nigerian church leaders, under the auspices of the nation's main ecumenical organization, the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), have declared that Christian public officials who are found to be corrupt will be expelled from their churches. The declaration follows reports that the nation's former head of state, the late General Sani Abacha, his family and close associates, had "looted" huge sums of money from the national treasury.

"The interest of Nigeria must be paramount in our minds now, and we must all be involved in building it," Dr. Sunday Mbang, CAN's national president and head of the Methodist Church of Nigeria, told a press conference in Lagos, Nigeria's largest city. "We have made up our minds that anyone who goes to government to serve people but rather chooses to serve himself shall be excommunicated from our fold. It is as serious as that," Mbang said. (ENI)

Stewardship conference an ecumenical affair

A coalition of Canadian and American churches is hosting the North American Stewardship Conference, to be held in Toronto June 23-26. Guest speakers and workshop leaders come from a wide spectrum: from Canadian humorist Charlie Farquharson (a.k.a. Don Herron) to Art Van Seters, principal of Knox College, Toronto, and John Westerhoff, director of the Institute for Pastoral Studies in Atlanta, Georgia.

More than 40 workshops featuring a host of stewardship-related issues are scheduled. Art Van Seters will speak about "Faith and Money" and lead a plenary workshop on "Preaching Stewardship." Other workshop leaders will come from Lutheran, Reformed, Roman Catholic and United churches.

The conference is sponsored by The Canadian Interchurch Stewardship Committee and The Ecumenical Stewardship Centre.

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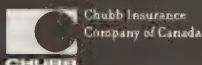
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WCC protests after attack on Kenyan environmentalist

The World Council of Churches (WCC) is protesting to Kenyan authorities about an attack by security guards on a leading Kenyan environmentalist, Professor Wangari Maathai, who has been closely associated with the activities of the WCC. Kenyan church leaders, including the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, Jesse Kamau, and the United Nations secretary general, Kofi Annan,

have also expressed deep concern over the incident.

Maathai, founder and co-ordinator of Kenya's Green Belt movement, suffered serious head injuries when she was attacked on January 8 by security guards as she and several other people tried to replant trees at Karura forest, near the Kenyan capital of Nairobi. The tree-planting was a protest against encroachment on the forest by real estate

developers, politicians and senior government officials.

Opposition politicians, foreign environmentalists and journalists were among those injured in the incident. According to press reports, the protesters were beaten by more than 200 guards, some of whom were armed with bows and arrows, clubs, metal bars and swords. Maathai spent several days in hospital. (ENI)

News Scan

Popular Canadian evangelist dies at 56

Terry Winter, a popular Canadian evangelist best known for his weekly television broadcast, *The Terry Winter Show*, died suddenly on December 10 from a brain hemorrhage. *The Terry Winter Show*, broadcast on 28 major television stations to one million viewers, featured interviews with guests who articulated the Christian faith.

"His heart and focus was Canada," said longtime friend Brian Stiller, president of Tyndale College and Seminary. "He had no interest in kingdom-building. His life was Kingdom-seeking." (Source: *Christian Week*)

Minister asks for explanation for 'Jesus-less' memorial service

Rev. Carolyn Nicholson, a United Church minister in Glen Margaret, Nova Scotia, is trying to find out why she was denied the right to read from the New Testament or to mention Jesus during a September 9 service to commemorate the 229 people killed in the Swiss Air Flight 11 crash off Peggy's Cove. Following the air disaster, Nicholson spent two days at Peggy's Cove with the families of the victims. When asked to say the blessing and opening prayer at a memorial service, she was eager to do so. However, a representative of the protocol office told her that no references to Christ and no New Testament readings were permit-

ted. Nicholson said she had to choose "between my integrity as a Christian minister or my desire to offer comfort to the families and the people of my faith who attended the service." Following the service, she sent a letter to the Prime Minister's office asking for an explanation. Four months later, she received a reply. A letter from the Prime Minister said the decision was not made by any representative of the government. A letter from the deputy chief of protocol said he was "very sorry" his "intention the service be all-inclusive ... may have been misconstrued." (Sources: *Calgary Sun* and *The United Church Observer*.)

Oswald Hoffman elected to hall of fame

Dr. Oswald Hoffman, a pioneer in religious broadcasting, has been inducted into the National Religious Broadcasters (NRB) Hall of Fame. The NRB, representing more than 1,000 radio and television stations, program producers and other individuals in the United States, presents its Hall of Fame award annually to an individual who, for a significant period of time, has made an outstanding contribution to the field of Christian broadcasting. From 1955 until his retirement in 1988, Hoffman served as the speaker on the weekly radio program *The Lutheran Hour*.

English thieves welcome churches' open door policy

English churches, with a long tradition

of keeping their doors open during daylight hours, are suffering from a crime wave which is hitting at least a third of all Anglican churches every year. After a national conference last week, Anglican dioceses are now planning to fight back with a "Church Watch" scheme involving volunteers who will watch over the vulnerable churches and who will have a hotline telephone link to the police. The Church of England owns the country's medieval churches, many of them housing valuable sacred objects. Another concern is that 30 per cent of claims to the main insurer for Anglican churches are for arson. (ENI)

Clinton receives reluctant pat on back

American television evangelist Pat Robertson, one of President Bill Clinton's most vociferous opponents and an early advocate for his removal from office, has suggested Clinton's Senate trial "might as well" end because of the president's continued political popularity. Robertson, a former Republican presidential candidate and a leading conservative Christian leader, said Clinton had "hit a home run" during his State of the Union speech on January 19. That speech reportedly boosted the president's public approval ratings to 76 per cent. Robertson made his remarks during a broadcast on the Christian Broadcasting Network the day after the State of the Union address. (ENI)



When Adversity Comes

I hurt my knees in soccer. Both of them, in alternating years. They take turns getting reinjured.

And, yes, I whine about them. Probably, a lot. More, at least, than any of my friends want to hear, I'm sure. I hate not being able to do something because I'm afraid my knee is going to give out. When I do hurt them again, I get extremely crabby extremely fast. And I feel very sorry for myself.

But I can still walk and run. If I do my physiotherapy exercises, I should be able to play most sports again without reinjury. I've really got nothing to complain about.

A friend of mine lost the use of his right arm in a motorcycle accident. I never asked if he was right-handed before the accident, but I assume he was. He can still do some things — prop a dish against his hip, or hold steady a jar he's opening with his other hand — but not much. He mostly tries to hide his infirmity, using his left hand to put his right one casually on his knee while no one is looking, for example.

I've got *nothing* to complain about.

But, on one level, telling people this doesn't help. Knowing that someone else has it worse doesn't make my knees hurt any less. Knowing that someone else can't walk or can't see doesn't take away the pain of my friend's right arm. Knowing that some people have lost entire families doesn't ease the loss of a loved one for someone else.

On another level, though, watching what

other people do with their infirmities *does* help.

My friend is a musician. He used to play guitar. A piano he cannot use sits in his room. I never asked, and cannot imagine, the emotional pain he must have gone through in addition to the physical pain after his arm was injured. If I couldn't play sports any more because of my knees, I wouldn't be happy; but, mostly, it would simply give me an excuse not to exercise. If I lost my eyesight, though, and couldn't read or write any more, I would lose my life — the life I have built, the life I know.

My friend now plays flutes he makes himself (I have *no* idea how he makes them). I've never seen anything like them before. They are wooden, with only a few holes. Some have dried gourds at the top which create resonance. Some have a drone flute, like a bagpipe, while the tune is played on the other flute. They all have personalities and names; one even has a face.

My friend plays them by propping up his right arm to make use of what little movement it still has. He changes pitch not only by covering or uncovering holes but also by blowing harder or softer (when you blow hard on a recorder, it jumps an octave). Sometimes, he plays them one-handed and uses his other hand to play a drum.

He draws on early Mediterranean instruments from North Africa and Provence as models

when making his. The music he plays probably has the same influences — folk tunes and lively dance songs.

So, not only has my friend discovered an instrument he could play after his injury (a trumpet would do as well), he now creates music out of the ordinary, with a historical and cultural background that is fascinating. I doubt anyone else in the world makes instruments or music quite as he does.

One of my high school teachers lost both of her grown-up sons in an accident. My mind shies away from even imagining what she and her husband must have gone through. Her husband is a French professor who was in Bayeux, France, when he heard about the accident. He had been working on a replica of the Bayeux tapestry; and, in the years after the accident, he recreated the entire tapestry. It stretches around a room about the size of a church sanctuary. The only change from the original, aside from the re-creation of a part that was irreparably damaged, was the addition of the names of his sons and the date of their deaths.

Telling people that someone else has it worse rarely helps; it simply adds guilt to the pain already being experienced. But looking at the things of beauty, the miracles people create out of their broken lives ... few things are more inspiring. Or humbling.

God grant me the grace to make miracles in my life, even a fraction as wondrous. **R**

Kathy Cawsey, a member of Knox Church, Waterloo, Ont., is studying at Oxford University. Write to Kathy at: Middle Common Room, Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, England OX2 6QA; by e-mail at kathleen.cawsey@lmh.ox.ac.uk.



PEOPLE & PLACES



▶ THE CONGREGATION OF Central Church, Hamilton, Ont., was happy to see last year's Lenten project amount to a hill of beans. During Lent, members collected loonies and toonies to pay for the cost of growing two acres of soybeans on land donated by Jim Watson. The soybeans were then donated to the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. Pictured are some of the members of Central on their way to view the project during the congregation's "Beans in Hope" corn roast.

A NEW BAPTISMAL FONT was dedicated by Rev. Gordon Hastings at St. Andrew's-Chalmers Church, Uxbridge, Ont., Nov. 22. The font is in memory of the parents of John and Ruth Pellis, and was designed and built by John, a cabinetmaker by profession.

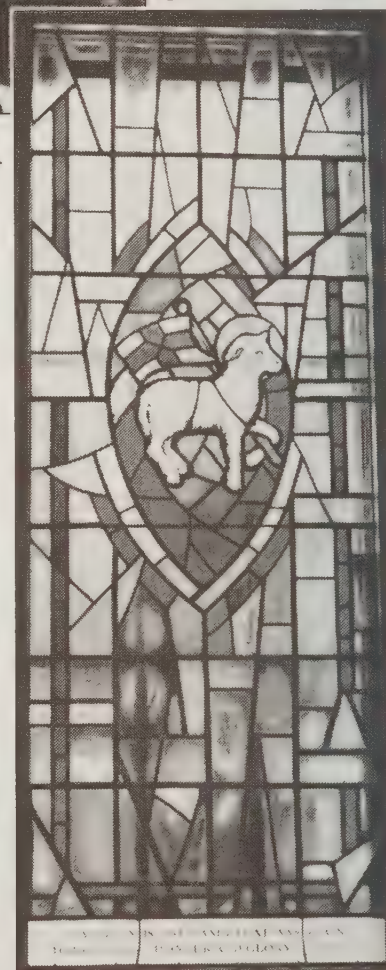


THE PASTORAL CARE COMMITTEE of St. Andrew's Church, Saskatoon, recently held a special worship service for shut-in members, followed by lunch provided by the Women's League. Pictured at one table are (L to R): Nora Hogg, Vera Forde, Viola Martin, Nan Morden and May Hislop.



▶ PASTOR FERNANDO CASCANTE of Iglesia El Divino Salvador, Calle Blancos, Costa Rica, was a special guest at an intergenerational service of thanksgiving held at Knox Church, Calgary, Oct. 11. He is pictured with Rev. Murdo Marple, minister of Knox, a partner church of the Costa Rican congregation.

TWO STAINED GLASS WINDOWS were recently dedicated at St. John's Church, Cornwall, Ont. *The Resurrection Lamb* (pictured) and *The Eagle* were given in memory of Mr. and Mrs. James R. Cameron by family members.



Please note: Photos submitted for People & Places must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope if they are to be returned. Also, please try to ensure all pictures are clear and do not include a multitude of people. Colour or black-and-white photos are acceptable, but negatives and slides cannot be used. Thank you.

PEOPLE & PLACES

THE CONGREGATION OF West Point Church, P.E.I., honoured Marie Phillips for her continued contribution to the life of the congregation. Marie has served as church organist for more than 50 years. She is pictured (centre) during a presentation by clerk of session Ruth MacIsaac (left) and elder MaryLou Rogers on behalf of the congregation.



ST ANDREW'S CHURCH, Richmond, Ont., celebrated its 175th anniversary in 1998 with several special events throughout the year. The anniversary service was held Oct. 4, with Rev. William Klempa the guest speaker. Following the service, the children of the church school planted a time capsule to be opened 25 years later. The anniversary supper was held Oct. 23, with the meal provided by members of St. John's Anglican Church, Richmond. Pictured at the planting of one of two maple trees during an old-home weekend in August are (L to R): Lola Sample, who was baptized at St. Andrew's and attended there until her marriage; Lilly Knox, a longtime member of the congregation and the WMS; Evelyen Reid, a former church school teacher and wife of former minister Rev. Newton Reid.

A memorial service was held for John Cameron Robson at Queen Street East Church, Toronto, on November 12. Robson, a well-known Presbyterian minister and social activist, served at Queen Street East Church for 33 years. He died on September 23, 1998.



TOM SHILCOCK, organist and choir director at Knox Church, Oakville, Ont., has received an associateship from the Royal School of Church Music (RSCM) in Surrey, England. The honorary diploma recognizes his service as chair of the Niagara and Southwestern Branch of the RSCM. He is only the sixth Canadian to receive the honour.



THE YOUTH GROUP OF St. Paul's Church, Simcoe, Ont., sponsored a pot-luck supper to raise money for the Francisco Coll School located near the Guatemala City dump. On the 10th anniversary of Rev. John Cruickshank's ministry at St. Paul's, the group took him hostage at the end of the Nov. 1 worship service and handed out a ransom note demanding everyone come to the supper that evening. The \$1,300 raised in "ransom money" ensured John's release.



THE CONGREGATION OF St. Paul's Church, Hamilton, Ont., recently honoured its minister, Rev. James R. Dickey, on the occasion of his receiving a Doctor of Divinity degree (*honoris causa*) from The Presbyterian College, Montreal. Pictured with him is clerk of session Jennifer MacLean, who presented a cheque from the congregation toward the purchase of a new clerical robe.

PEOPLE & PLACES

A PICTURE FRAME OF FLOWERS was received by the congregation of First Church, New Westminster, B.C., recently. The flower arrangements were provided from the garden of elder Dr. Olive Sinclair for the sanctuary each Sunday and were photographed by Grace Calhoun.



THE CONGREGATION OF Bethel Church, Pictou Landing, N.S., celebrated its 125th anniversary last year. As part of the celebrations, presentations were made to three senior members of the congregation who had a parent or parents who were charter members of the church. Pictured (L to R) are: Rev. Paul A. Brown, senior members Fernie MacPherson, Muriel Sproull, Gladys MacKay and clerk of session Bill MacPherson.

THE PRESBYTERY OF SUPERIOR made history at its November 1998 meeting when it elected Margaret (Peggy) Graham (right) as its first lay moderator. With her is the new clerk, Beth Stewart, also a layperson.



"ST. ANDREW'S ON PARADE" was the name of the float entered in the Burk's Falls, Ont., Christmas parade by the congregation of St. Andrew's Church. The float piped Christmas carols over the sound system, while shepherds tended a flock of children dressed in sheep's clothing.



A NEW PULPIT BIBLE (*Good News Bible*) was presented to the congregation of St. Andrew's Church, Belleville, Ont., in memory of Elsie Hiuser by her husband, Cecil Hiuser, and members of the family. Pictured (L to R) are: (back row) David, Ronald, Cecil Jr. and Timothy Hiuser; (middle row) Charlene, Amy, Valerie and Ken Hiuser, and Rev. Craig Cribar; (front row) Ryan and Cecil Hiuser.

PEOPLE & PLACES

THE CHURCH SCHOOL STUDENTS of Knox Church, St. Catharines, Ont., learned about the Festival of Booths when they built the booth pictured behind them and took part in arts, crafts, decorating and food preparation.

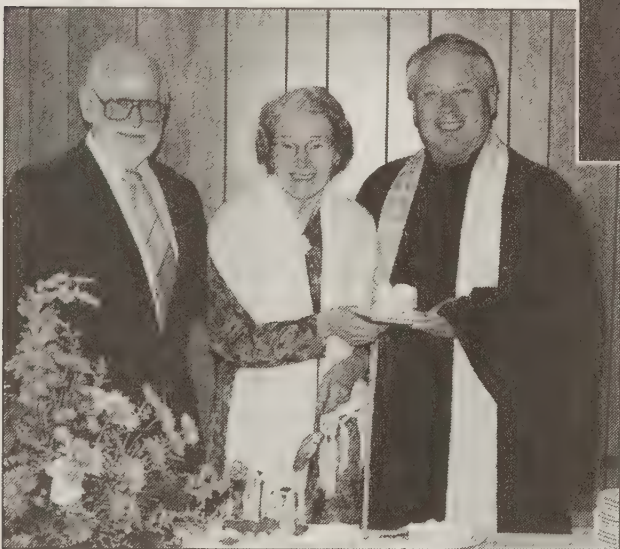


LILLIAN SORENSON, the longest serving member of St. Andrew's Church, Flin Flon, Man., celebrated her 97th birthday last year.

BARBARA EDMONDS, an elder of Petawawa Church, Petawawa, Ont., is pictured (right) with medical missionaries Dr. James and Dr. Rosemarie Gilbert of Pembroke, Ont., following the presentation of a \$1,100 cheque toward their mission to the Presbyterian hospital in Chagora, Kenya. The congregation raised the money as its fall mission project.



RON AND BERNICE MARTIN reaffirmed their marriage vows during a regular worship service at Iona Church, North York, Ont. The ceremony was a surprise to most of the congregation except for Rev. Jim Biggs and members of the women's group who supplied a cake for the occasion.



A RENEWAL FELLOWSHIP DAY was held at Knox Church, Wallaceburg, Ont., last November. "The Future Church: 2000 and Beyond" was the topic covered by special guest Rev. Neal Mathers. Workshops were led by Rev. Hugh Appèl, Rev. Chuck Congram and Rev. Calvin Brown. The Knox Praise Team led the participants in music. Pictured (L to R) are Hugh Appèl, Calvin Brown, Chuck Congram and Neal Mathers.



Film / Audio

reviewed by Heather Chappell

The Prince of Egypt (DreamWorks Pictures, 1998).

In 1994, Jeffrey Katzenberg, Steven Spielberg and David Geffen were discussing their plans and ambitions for their new studio venture, *DreamWorks*. They listed the criteria they believed necessary for a great animated film: it would have to be a powerful allegory that people could relate to in our time, include extraordinary situations to motivate strong emotional journeys, show the wonderful quality of the human spirit and good triumphing over evil, and use music as a compelling story-telling element. And, then, the idea came to them: why not tell the story of Moses?

And so they do. And it works. Beautifully.

The film-makers wanted to be "faithful to the text without always being literal — to embrace the themes and the fundamental aspects of the story as they are presented in the Bible." Both historical and artistic licence has been taken (much of the film focuses on the relationship between Moses and his fictitious half-brother Rameses, who later be-

comes Pharaoh; Moses is found and raised by Pharaoh's wife, not daughter; Aaron plays a minor role while Miriam is given an important role). Still, the basic story remains intact, and it is told respectfully and rendered lovingly.

Traditional and computer animation is used in this movie, allowing for both careful individual characterization and spectacular special effects. The three miracle sequences alone (the Burning Bush, the Plagues/Angel of Death and the parting of the Red Sea) are well worth the admission price. There is also a stunning dream scene in which hieroglyphs come to life and move along the walls, depicting the oppression and murder of the Israelites.

Despite its medium, this is a movie intended for adults. It is not candy-coated Disney fare. The subject matter is heavy and there is little comic relief. There are some frightening scenes of plagues, death and oppression. However, children should be encouraged to see this film. It breathes new life into the Exodus story and humanizes Moses as a man who must come to terms with his past, his heritage and his faith. It also encourages questions and creates a desire to know more about the story. And it is a

Address Change:

Please note, the address for Rev. Neil J. McLean, author of *Gems From the Bible* (Reviews, Jan. '99 *Record*), has changed to: 49 Colby St., Sydney, N.S. B1P 3P9.

refreshing change to see a movie with biblical values amid the usual Hollywood fodder. Go see this movie. You won't be disappointed.

The Prince of Egypt (CDs produced by Buster and Shavoni, 1998).

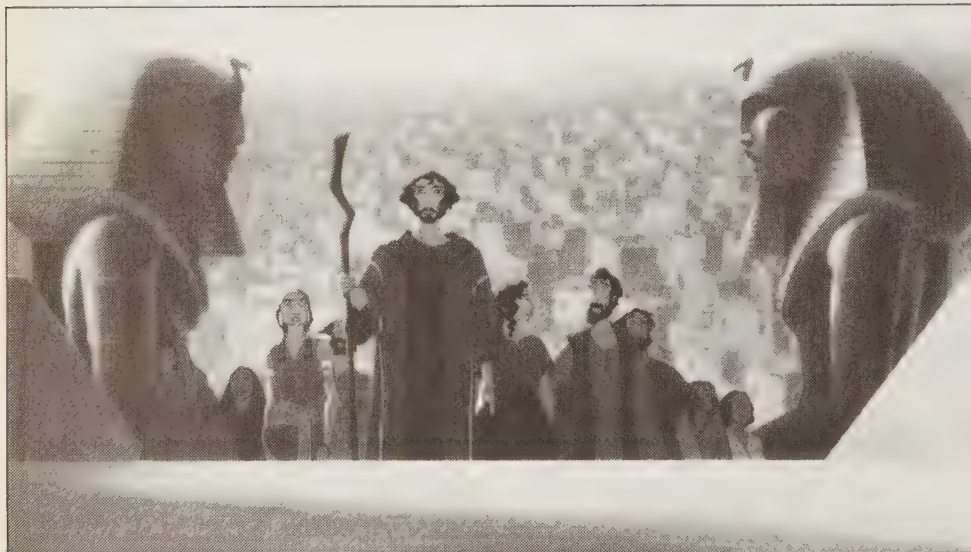
If you are looking for the soundtrack for DreamWorks Pictures' *The Prince of Egypt*, be warned: there is more than one CD, and only one contains music from the film. In a unique marketing strategy, the music from *The Prince of Egypt* extends beyond what is heard in the movie itself. For the first time, three distinctly different albums have been produced in support of one film — the soundtrack plus two "inspired by" compilations.

The Prince of Egypt — Soundtrack features music from the film, including the song "When You Believe," a much-hyped duet performed by Whitney Houston and Mariah Carey. Other songs on the album are performed by the movie's main voice actors, including Michelle Pfeiffer, Ralph Fiennes, Steve Martin, Martin Short and critically acclaimed Israeli singer Ofra Haza.

The Prince of Egypt — Nashville is a compilation of songs performed by such country artists as Reba McEntire, Vince Gill and Randy Travis.

The Prince of Egypt — Inspirational brings together a number of top-selling pop, urban and gospel artists including Boyz II Men, Jars of Clay, DC Talk and Brian McKnight. The songs tell the story of Moses from different perspectives. For example, CeCe Winans sings "The River," a plea from Moses' mother to

Photo: courtesy of DreamWorks Pictures



Left to right: Tziporah (Michelle Pfeiffer), Moses (Val Kilmer), Miriam (Sandra Bullock) and Aaron (Jeff Goldblum) lead the Hebrews out of Egypt.



Mariah Carey (left) and Whitney Houston perform "When You Believe" from the *Prince of Egypt* soundtrack.

keep her son safe as she sets him in the river, and Donnie McClurkin's "I Am" has God speaking to Moses from the burning bush.

I preferred the *Soundtrack* songs to those on the *Inspirational* CD — they seem more accessible. However, I did enjoy DC Talk's rendition of "My Deliverer" (co-written by Rich Mullins/Mitch McVicker) and Jars of Clay's "Everything in Between." If you like modern Christian pop and gospel music, then this CD is for you. If you are looking for music from the film, then make sure you pick up the soundtrack.

Heather Chappell is program assistant, Stewardship and Education for Mission, Life and Mission Agency.

Two Books on Henri Nouwen

reviewed by Gunar Kravalis

Henri Nouwen: A Restless Seeking for God by Jurjen Beumer (*Crossroad*, 1998, \$25.50).

This book is a good general introduction to the life and work of Henri Nouwen.

That being said, I confess I experienced more than a few frustrations in reading it. The publisher states this is an authorized biography of Henri Nouwen by a man who knew him well over a 10-year period. In fact, the biographical section makes up less than half the total length of his work and tells little of surprise.



Henri J. M. Nouwen

Beumer claims in the introduction that he wants to write a biography of Henri Nouwen, not a hagiography. Unfortunately, hagiography is precisely what we get. Although Henri's foibles and emotional problems were documented in his books and well-known to his many friends, Beumer barely mentions Henri's personal demons and gives no insight into their basis. I came

away from this book feeling I knew less about Henri after reading the biographical section, compared to the knowledge I gained from the privilege of knowing him personally.

In the second half, dealing with the work of Henri Nouwen, there are some useful observations as to how Christians in his home country of Holland regard him; but, in general, Beumer avoids making any meaningful critique of Nouwen's thought.

Sabbatical Journey: The Diary of His Final Year by Henri J. M. Nouwen (*Crossroad*, 1998, \$31.75).

Sabbatical Journey chronicles the final year of Henri Nouwen's life. He made his last entry three weeks before his death on September 21, 1996. His death occurred in Holland, the result of a massive heart attack. While I did not find the book an especially profound work, I found it poignant reading, at least partly because I developed heart disease the previous summer.

The Daybreak community had insisted Henri take the sabbatical in order to rest and concentrate on his writing. Instead of writing and resting, Henri spent his sabbatical travelling and meeting nearly a thousand individuals all over North America and Europe. He crammed writing in between countless personal engagements. It is upsetting to read of him complaining how ex-

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REVIEWS

hausted he is and yet never seeking medical attention. It is eerie and, at times, heart-breaking to hear him talk of how he would like his funeral to be done, what he and a friend will speak of in five years, whether he will live long enough to conduct the wedding of the baby he recently baptized, and making plans and appointments we know he will never keep.

Henri's diary contains many interesting observations and insights that will enrich the reader. We also gain a fascinating picture of how Henri interacted with a wide variety of people, particularly his family, childhood friends and Father Laurent. This is Henri in a truly human, personal light. Readers will find no great, famous last words or insights from Henri Nouwen. *Sabbatical Journey* simply records the busy, passionate life of Henri Nouwen soon before he was taken from us — a life with all its gems and warts. His human life is now ended but, along with all the rest of the communion of the saints, he is still imparting life and truth to all who seek them.

Gunar Kravalis is the minister of Burns Church, Milverton, and North Mornington Church in Ontario.

***Becoming Human* by Jean Vanier**
(*House of Anansi*, 1998, \$16.95).
Reviewed by Wayne A. Holst.

When this reviewer first heard Jean Vanier speak, it was to an ecumenical group of idealistic students and their friends 30 years ago. Much has changed over three decades; but, in a true sense, Vanier and his message have not. He has only become more seasoned and experienced in his understanding of basic faith, the importance of the poor and the implications of all this for people in the "real world." Back then, he was sketching his views to a group of Christians soon after Vatican II. Now, his content and the nature of his audience have expanded considerably. He quotes from the Koran and the Dalai Lama to amplify insights from Jesus. He is more quietly confident to share truth as he understands it with postmoderns searching for meaning.

Vanier was invited to give the prestigious 1998 CBC Massey Lecture Series. That offered him an audience he would not normally reach. *Becoming Human* is essentially the text of his talks. The five lectures (on "Loneliness," "Belonging," "From Exclusion to Inclusion: A Path of Healing," "The Path to Freedom" and "Forgiveness") are vintage Vanier, but with a difference. His message seeks to confront, on its own turf, the secular penchant for personal and societal renewal through pragmatic and rational restructuring rather than by means of a profound spiritual change in the human heart.

Two parallel streams permeate this series: the *personal* and the *societal* need for healing and hope. Experience has taught the author that the latter is interdependent with the former. "A changed person can change society" is his nuanced and repeated message. He also makes it radically clear that "society must change its basic priorities to include and integrate the individual in all his or her variety and difference."

"Becoming human" in community is not so much a matter of acquiring knowledge, power and status — the normal way to success — as of focusing on human essentials and the heart which he calls "the powerhouse of love." Welcoming a few people who are different to become friends can start to change society. This is the way of the heart.

Reading this book will challenge any reader to a profound reassessment of values. Vanier's insights are as poignant for growing numbers outside organized religion as they are for church people struggling to locate faith in a rapidly changing world.

Wayne A. Holst is a lecturer at the University of Calgary. He was a Lutheran pastor, missionary and church executive for 25 years and his current work focuses on the comparative spirituality of indigenous peoples and cross-cultural awareness.

Most books reviewed may be purchased through The Book Room, 50 Wynford Dr., North York, Ont. M3C 1J7. Do not send payment with order. An invoice will follow. Please include name and location of congregation. Toll-free order line: 1-800-619-7301, ext. 301.

DEATHS

BUTCHER, REV. DR. WILFRED F., in his 91st year, on June 27, 1998. Born in Suffolk, England; graduated from the University of Manitoba and Knox College. He served Presbyterian churches in St. John's, Nfld.; Medicine Hat, Alta.; Fort Erie, New Liskeard, Ont.; St. Andrew's Church, Quebec City. RCAF padre with bomber command in England and Italy. General Secretary of the Canadian Council of Churches 1964-67. In his retirement, he served as assistant minister of Hopedale Presbyterian Church, Oakville, Ont., and Glenview Church, Toronto, and was minister emeritus of Glebe Church, Toronto.

MacLEAN, REV. RANDOLPH DOUGLAS, died peacefully in his sleep on January 13, 1999, in New Glasgow, N.S. Born May 1, 1915, in North Sydney, N.S., he was the son of the late Margaret (MacKenzie) and Neil MacLean. Predeceased by his beloved wife of 50 years, Ruth C. MacLeod, and by his brother Alex and sister Mary. Survived by daughter Iris Marriott (and her husband Gordon) of Bradford, Ont.; daughter Rev. Iona MacLean (and husband Rev. Glenn Cooper) of Pictou, N.S.; granddaughter Shannon (Marriott) Lee and her husband Rick of Stroud, Ont.; grandson Thom Marriott of Stratford, Ont.; and great-grandson Mason Thomas Lee. A graduate of Dalhousie University (BA); The Presbyterian College, Montreal (BD); and the Atlantic School of Theology (M.Th.). Ordained to the ministry of The Presbyterian Church in Canada in 1941; churches served were St. Andrew's, Moncton, N.B.; Montague pastoral charge, P.E.I.; St. Andrew's, Huntingdon, P.Q.; St. Andrew's, Belleville, Ont.; St. James (Pollock), Glasgow, Scotland; and Knox, Halifax. Retired to Boularderie, Cape Breton. After retirement, served as interim minister at St. David's in St. John's, Nfld.; Knox and St. James in Boularderie, N.S.; and Paterson Memorial in Sarnia, Ont.

ROBSON, REV. DR. JOHN CAMERON, 78, died September 24, 1998, in Peterborough, Ontario. He was born in the Baysville,

Muskoka, region of Ontario July 15, 1920. Later, he moved to Barrie and, then, to Toronto where he became a member of Knox Presbyterian Church. While attending Lawrence Park Collegiate, he helped form an Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship group which met at Glenview Presbyterian Church. He received BA and MA degrees from University College, U of T, and a BD and the honorary Doctor of Divinity degree from Knox College.

John served on student mission fields, including Alberton and West Point, Prince Edward Island, and in the Muskokas of Ontario. With ordination in 1946, he went to St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Huntsville, Ont. In 1954, he accepted a call to Queen Street East Presbyterian Church in Toronto where he served until retirement in 1987. His work in the inner city and his love and concern for the individual led him to the realization that it wasn't enough simply to care for the battered, bruised and forgotten of society. The system itself needed to reflect the love of God for all people. So John became active in the development of the Riverdale community organization, the Riverdale Intercultural Council and the Committee Against Racism which stood against the KKK and many others.

John served various committees of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, including the Committee on the Laity, International Affairs, Evangelism and Social Action, and Articles of Faith. He wrote various briefs, study papers and pamphlets to exhort, encourage discussion and inform. He took seriously his participation in the courts of the church and often brought a calming influence as he strove to foster love and reconciliation in difficult circumstances.

John enjoyed the outdoors, which sometimes involved sleeping under a canoe and keeping an eye out for a good trout stream. His love of music shone through, whether singing old gospel favourites, modern choruses or humorous creations. His enthusiasm energized sing-alongs at seniors residences, youth

events or informal get-togethers.

John is survived by his wife, Nina, with whom he shared his love and concern for the weakest of society. He is also survived by five children and nine grandchildren.

ANTHONY, DOUGLAS, 82, longtime adherent, St. Andrew's, St. Lambert, Que., Nov. 23; father of Terry Anthony-Folster, Saskatoon Native Circle Ministry.

BARR, ETHEL, 78 years old, a longtime faithful member of First Presbyterian Church, Chatham, Ont.

BARR, HELEN NICKERSON, of Waterloo, Ont., at the age of 78, peacefully at St. Mary's Hospital, Kitchener, Ont., on Thursday, July 30, lovingly surrounded by her family. Dear mother to Roderick (Alison Knight) of Oakville, Ont.; Janet (François Higgins) of Fredericton, N.B.; Rev. Alan (Carol) of Belleville, Ont.; Mary (Ron Coughlan) of Toronto; and Peter (Wendy Donahue) of Guelph, Ont. Cherished grandmother to Scott (Vanessa), Brian, Carolyn, Marc, Catherine, Lindsey, Barbara, Alexander, Andrew, Timothy, Brittany and Emma. Predeceased by her beloved husband, Rev. Ferguson J. Barr, with whom she shared many happy memories of their journey through life together, beginning at University of Toronto where they met, and then at each of Fergie's charges: East River pastoral charge in Nova Scotia; Geneva Presbyterian Church in Chesley, Ont.; St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Stratford, Ont.; St. Giles Presbyterian Church in Sarnia, Ont.; St. Paul's Presbyterian Church in Simcoe, Ont.; as well as at Lion's Head, where they holidayed each summer from 1948 on, and in Fergus, Ont., where they retired together, Fergie from active ministry and Helen from her career as a high school English teacher. Following her husband's death in 1982, Helen moved to Waterloo where she continued to contribute her talents and abilities to the life and work of the Presbyterian Church at St. Andrew's, Kitchener, Ont.

Helen left an indelible mark at each of these stops along the way, and will be re-

The Transitions column welcomes announcements of special events such as births, marriages, anniversaries, baptisms and the reception of new members, as well as death notices. The rate is 90 cents per word or \$43 per column inch (the lower amount) plus GST.

All notices of pulpit vacancies, recognitions, ordinations and inductions will be charged to presbyteries: \$10 for the basic notice and 90 cents per word for additional information. (There will be no charge to congregations on the Every Home or Club 50 plans.)

membered by all those whose lives she touched, for her love of music, language, humanity and life. Services were held on Saturday, August 1, in St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Kitchener, Ont., with Rev. John Kurtz officiating, and at Lion's Head United Church, Lion's Head, Ont., on Monday, August 3, with Rev. Anna Chen officiating. Helen is buried with her husband at Lion's Head Cemetery in Lion's Head, Ont.

CLARK, GEORGE, 85, received into membership March 1929, St. Andrew's, St. Lambert, Que., Jan. 16.

CUMMINGS, FREDERICK, 80, faithful member and dedicated elder, St. Andrew's, Sutton, Ont., Oct. 27.

DRURY, DONALD EDWARD, died on Jan. 8. He was born in Smith's Parish, Bermuda, in July 1918. Donald was a faithful member of St. Andrew's Church, serving as an elder for over 40 years. He devoted much time and effort to the welfare and running of the church. He married Barbara, his long-distance love in Boston, in 1954 during Hurricane Edna. They made their home in Bermuda and raised two daughters, Donna and Cindy. He was a devoted family man who loved his home and garden. Donald will be missed by all who knew him. He was buried in St. Mark's Churchyard in Smith's Parish to the sounds of a piper in full regalia on Jan 12.

GARTSHORE, RENEE, in her 77th year, longtime member, elder, former clerk of session, was called home in her church, St. Andrew's, Fort Frances, Ont., on Oct. 4; Renee served her church in the choir and as representative elder for many years, serving on presbytery, synod and national committees. She is missed by all.

HORNE, KENNETH JAMES, in his 77th year, died while vacationing in Bermuda on Sept. 28. Ken spent most of his working career in industry in Montreal. He was very active in The Presbyterian Church in Canada and was a lay minister in Lansdowne and Caintown, Ont. He moved to Markham, Ont., and continued his involvement in the church and military in Toronto, Markham and Florida. Ken and Eileen retired to Penetanguishene, Ont., where they became very active in the work of Knox Presbyterian Church, Midland, Ont.

PERRIN, INEZ, 84 years old, a longtime faithful member of First Presbyterian Church, Chatham, Ont.

RUCKER, NELLIE, 81 years old, a longtime faithful member of First Presbyterian Church, Chatham, Ont.

SMITH, WILLIAM STANLEY, 70, active member and elder of Lakeshore St. Andrew's, Tecumseh, Ont., Jan. 16.

TUER, SONYA, 62, this strong, active woman served in many facets of the church and community; lifelong member of Burns Presbyterian Church, Milverton, Ont., Nov. 13.

ORDINATIONS and INDUCTIONS

Dayton, Rev. Bruce, Presbytery of Oak Ridges, Emmanuel, Schomberg, Ont., Jan. 3.

Fraser, Rev. Brenda Jean, Kildonan Community Church, Winnipeg, Jan. 3.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES and INTERIM MODERATORS

Synod of the Atlantic Provinces

Barney's River, N.S., Marshy Hope pastoral charge. Rev. John Cameron, RR 1, Merigomish, N.S. B0K 1G0.

Halifax, Church of St. David. Rev. P.A. McDonald, 4 Pinehill Rd., Dartmouth, N.S. B3A 2E6.

Harvey Station, N.B., Knox and Acton. Rev. Philip Lee, 311 Bay Crescent Dr., Saint John, N.B. E2M 6M1.

Hopewell, N.S., First; Gairloch, St. Andrew's; Rocklin, Middle River. Rev. Mitch McVeigh, RR 5, New Glasgow, N.S. B2H 5C8.

Middle River, N.S., Farquharson; Lake Ainslie; Kenloch. Rev. Lloyd Murdock, PO Box 184, Baddeck, N.S. B0E 1B0.

Miramichi, N.B., St. James. Rev. Mel Fawcett, 395 Murray Ave., Bathurst, N.B. E2A 1T4.

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Beauharnois, Que., St. Edward's; Valleyfield, Valleyfield Church (part-time). Rev. Kate Jordan, 50 Prince, Huntingdon, Que. J0S 1H0.

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Glencoe, Glencoe Church; Wardsville, St. John's. Rev. Kathryn Strachan, PO Box 72, Appin, Ont. N0L 1A0.

Kintyre, Knox; New Glasgow, Knox; Rodney, St. John's. Rev. Mark Gedcke, 450 Regal Dr., London, Ont. N5Y 1J9.
Komoka; North Caradoc; Mount Brydges, St. Andrew's. Rev. Dennis Carrothers, 901-700 Wonderland Rd. N, London, Ont. N6H 4V3.
Markdale, Cooke's; Feversham, Burn's. Mr. Rick Ledenmuller, RR 6, Markdale, Ont. N0C 1H0.
Niagara Falls, Stamford. Rev. Martin Wehrmann, c/o 515 Scott St., St. Catharines, Ont. L2M 3X3.
North Pelham, First; Rockway. Rev. Elizabeth S. Kidnew, 30 Brookbank Cres., Fonthill, Ont. L0S 1E0.
Owen Sound, St. Andrew's (associate minister of Christian development). Rev. Ted Nelson, c/o 865 2nd Ave. W, Owen Sound, Ont. N4K 4M6.
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Regina, Norman Kennedy. Rev. Deborah Lannon, 2170 Albert St., Regina, Sask. S4P 2T9.

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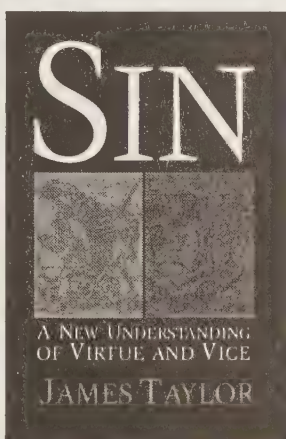
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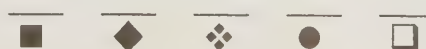
ArithmeCode by Dave Mitchell

Find the value of each symbol by doing the arithmetic. Replace each symbol with the letter which corresponds to its value to find the *ArithmeCode* word below. Category: PSALM 121

- i $(8 \times 7 \div 4) - (9 \times 6 \div 27) = \bullet$
- ii $(40\% \text{ of } \bullet) + (0.6 \times 7) = \blacklozenge$
- iii $(\blacklozenge \div \bullet) \times (\bullet + 4) = \blacklozenge$
- iv $(5/6 \text{ of } \blacklozenge) + (0.5 \times \blacklozenge \times 2) = \square$
- v $\square + \blacklozenge + \blacklozenge + \bullet - 44 = \blacksquare$

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z		
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	

The *ArithmeCode* word is:



ArithmeCode answer from last issue: CANA

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Booklets of 100 puzzles available at \$10 each. Standard version (as above), Junior, Integer versions. Send a cheque payable to ArithmeCode, 143 White Pine Cr., Waterloo, ON N2V 1B3. www.arithmecode.com e-mail: mitchell@kw.igs.net

017

A Child's Way

A page to share with the children you love

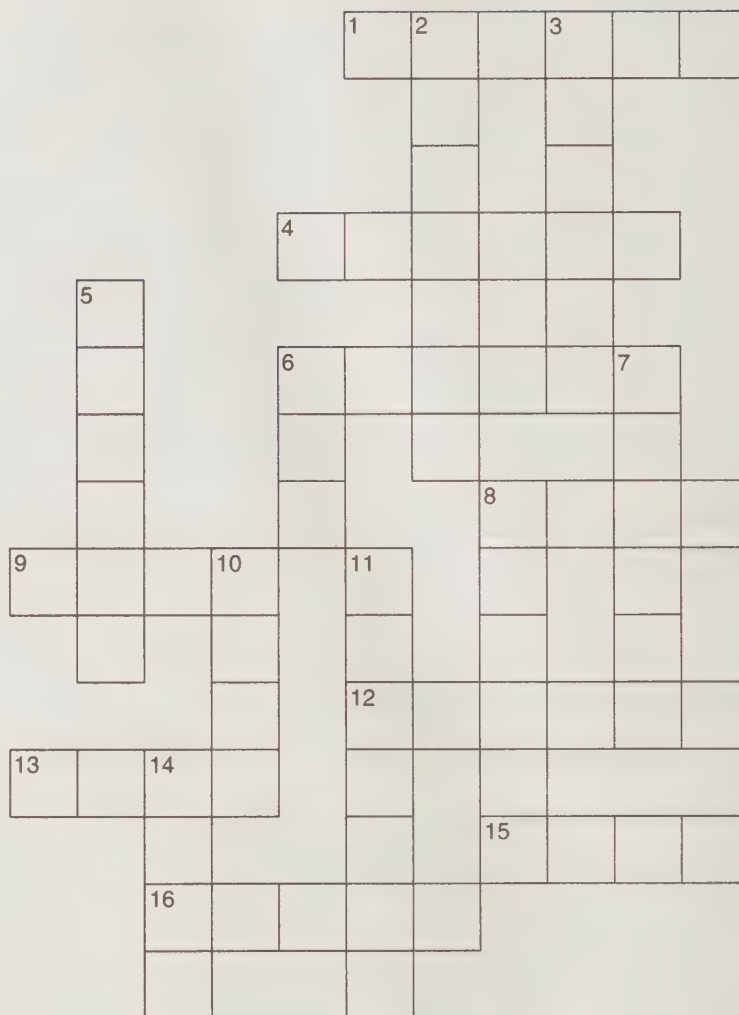
Written by Karen Timbers,
minister of Elmwood Avenue
Church, London, Ont.

GOD CHOOSES A CHILD TO BE A PROPHET

1. Read the first three chapters of I Samuel and tell the story in your own words.
2. Complete the crossword puzzle using the *New International Version* of the Bible.

An Exercise

- Talk to adults you know. When they were children, what did they want to do as adults?
- What do you think God wants you to do when you become an adult?
- How could you be God's prophet at your age?



Down

- 2 Samuel's father's name _____. (I Samuel 1:21)
- 3 Eli was a _____. (I Samuel 2:11)
- 5 Hannah brought Samuel to the temple in _____. (I Samuel 2:11)
- 6 The priest's name was _____. (I Samuel 2:11)
- 7 Hannah called her son _____. (I Samuel 1:20)
- 8 Samuel's mother's name _____. (I Samuel 1:22)
- 10 Eli said, "Let the Lord do what is _____." (I Samuel 3:18)
- 11 Samuel hid _____ from Eli. (I Samuel 3:18)
- 14 Every year Hannah gave Samuel a _____. (I Samuel 2:19)

Across

- 1 Samuel lived at the _____. (I Samuel 3:3)
- 4 Hannah _____ for a child. (I Samuel 1:27)
- 6 God humbles and _____. (I Samuel 2:7)
- 8 Elkanah went _____ to Ramah. (I Samuel 2:11)
- 9 "How _____ will you keep getting drunk?" (I Samuel 1:14)
- 12 The news would make ears _____. (I Samuel 3:11)
- 13 It was the _____ who spoke to Samuel. (I Samuel 3:10)
- 15 "_____ I am," Samuel said. (I Samuel 3:16)
- 16 Eli was almost _____. (I Samuel 3:2)

Answers to crossword
puzzle are on page 33.

A note to adults reading this page:

Make sure you tell this story with plenty of drama. As the child listens, he or she could add the sound effects or pantomime Samuel's actions. Have fun with the story and make it memorable.

A King? Who Cares?

Gwyneth Whilsmith

Every Good Friday, I remember Pat. Several years ago, this young doctor lived next door. He, his wife and three little girls dropped over often. They were devout Roman Catholics.

One Good Friday morning, he came in on his way home from making house calls. It was a beautiful, breezy day with tulips and daffodils dancing up and down the street to the trill of chorusing birds. A good day to be alive. Yet, a scowl covered my neighbour's face.

"I can't believe it," he fumed. "Everyone is either hanging out blankets, raking up yards or taking cars apart! You'd think Good Friday was like any other day of the year!"

In answer to my raised eyebrows, he explained, "In my parents' home, Good Friday was a sacred day!"

Shortly after, the family moved so he could return to college to specialize in his chosen field. Eventually, we lost all contact with them. Yet, each Good Friday, I think about Pat and wonder if he's still committed to Good Friday as a sacred day. And if his little girls, now grown, are too. I hope so.

Most people today view Good Friday as simply another statutory holiday. It's a day to get on with springtime chores, shop or visit friends. They place no special significance on the day.

Two thousand years ago, on the first Good Friday, there were people who were anything but complacent about the day. Hotly and contemptuously, the chief priests denounced the words Pilate had written on the sign on the cross above Jesus' head — "This is Jesus, King of the Jews."

"King of the Jews?" they spat. "Not a chance!"

Those people at least *reacted* to Jesus and were challenged by the words "King of the Jews." Short-sighted they may have been, but they still believed God was active in their history. Today's society neither denounces nor affirms the words over the cross; for the most part, their reaction is total indifference.

Easter is the most important day of the Christian year — the cornerstone of our faith. Without the Crucifixion and Resurrection, as Paul pointed out, we would be the "most wretched" of people, with no hope at all. Yet, even Christians have drifted away from keeping Good Friday holy. At one time, churches were packed for Good Friday services; now, only a few attend.

Those who stood at the foot of the cross watching the Crucifixion failed to recognize the sacrificial love that redeems humans to God. The implications of the empty tomb and Resurrection escaped them. Christians, however, should be able to catch that incredible vision!

Only through the events of Good Friday and Easter morning can we comprehend something of God's limitless love. Jesus' resurrection gives us strength for victory over our earthly troubles. It gives us the great and glorious hope of eternal life. Let us look at the man on the cross and declare boldly, "He is not only the King of the Jews but our King as well!" **R**

Gwyneth Whilsmith is an author and member of Bayfield Church in Bayfield, Ont.

**Good Friday —
not like any
other day**





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"IF ONLY I HAD ENOUGH MONEY TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!"

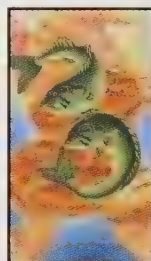
Perhaps that thought has entered your mind as you prayed for the church's work with partners in countries around the world, or maybe for a project in your congregation, or church growth in Canada, or work with homeless people or Christian camping for children and youth. Do you wrestle with this dilemma? Is your passion for God's work sometimes greater than your financial resources to support that work?

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PRESBYTERIAN Record

April 1999

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'99 \rightarrow \$40!!

75% decrease

Mkt. price \$40
Raise/ship hog \$130

\$90 LOSS

Mortgage
remaining
equity



Government aid
\$40 million
 \div 6000 producers
= \$7000
not enough!

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Equipment
Housing
Shipping
\$130 per hog

Income
+ Equity
- Mortgages

Hog prices down 75%
Cost to raise hog same

The Family Farm Crisis

\$90 LOSS

Equity gone

20 years work = NOTHING

Expenses
= LOSS

Mkt. price \$40
Raise/ship hog \$130
\$90 LOSS

A missionary, with an imperfect knowledge of a certain African dialect, translated the benedictory lines "Lord, dismiss us with thy blessing" so that it read, "Lord, kick us out softly."

— from *Prayers and Graces*
collected by Allen M. Laing

There is no true following after Jesus that does not pass through deserts and dark nights.

— Eugene Peterson in
The Wisdom of Each Other



The Child Is a Witness

The child is an ever-attentive witness of grown-up morality — or lack thereof; the child looks and looks for cues as to how one ought to behave, and finds them galore as we parents and teachers go about our lives, making choices, addressing people, showing in action our rock-bottom assumptions, desires, and values, and thereby telling those young observers much more than we may realize.

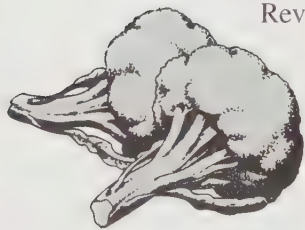
— Robert Coles

Poorer Canadians Are More Generous

Canadian charities could bring in \$8 billion more per year if well-off families donated as generously as low-income families. A new poll shows Canadians who make less than \$20,000 per year donate more than three times more of their income to charity than those families who take in \$80,000 a year.

The largest survey of Canadians' attitudes to charity and volunteering found low-income families donate 1.48 per cent of household income to charities and non-profit organizations, while those making more than \$80,000 donate only .43 per cent.

— Douglas Todd in the *Vancouver Sun*



Read more Leviticus and less Revelation! It's like a nutritionist recommending more broccoli for the diet and less Five Alarm Chili!

— submitted by
Rev. James McKay,
Saskatoon

Many of Professor William Barclay's books about the Bible and the Christian faith became best-sellers. For a long time, Dr. Barclay was unaware how well-off he was financially. He had no real interest in money. A friend finally persuaded him to consult an accountant. Having examined the box which Dr. Barclay brought, a box crammed full of bank and royalty statements, the accountant smiled and said to Dr. Barclay, "I am beginning to wish I had stuck in at Sunday school."

— James Simpson

God as Father

I think the Pope's announcement is very timely, and the church has to make some concessions. The word "father" is not always a good association for many people. But I think "Father" is God's name and not merely an analogy. We don't predicate God's nature on human experience, but on who God is as revealed in Jesus Christ. God is the original Father, regardless of what that word has come to mean in human terms.

— Glen Soderholm, commenting on Pope John Paul II's statement that the traditional patriarchal idea of God should be rejected (*National Post*, January 20, 1999)

Number of
street children
in the world:
150 million.

Dear Little Sweetheart:

This is a little Easter card to tell you how much I love you. To tell you too about one who loved you so much that he died for you and was buried. They placed a great stone against his tomb, but angels rolled the stone away and he rose again. His name is Jesus and he is still your very best friend. I hope you will come to know him soon and love him very much.

— from a 1921 letter sent to four-year-old Mary Jane Beattie by her father

Sent as Shepherds

Too often I looked at being relevant, popular, and powerful as ingredients of an effective ministry. The truth, however, is that these are not vocations but temptations. Jesus asks, "Do you love me?" Jesus sends us out to be shepherds, and Jesus promises a life in which we increasingly have to stretch out our hands and be led to places where we would rather not go. He asks us to move from a concern for relevance to a life of prayer, from worries about popularity to communal and mutual ministry, and from a leadership built on power to a leadership in which we critically discern where God is leading us and our people.

— Henri J. M. Nouwen in *In the Name of Jesus*



The Importance of Opinions

The other day, I received a letter without an address, so I could not respond to the writer's complaint. It was typical of many letters we receive about items in the magazine. The letter put it this way: "Why are you encouraging as a regular contributor a person who espouses views contrary to our church's doctrine?"

Good question. However, the answer is more complicated than it may seem on the surface. Let me begin by quoting the purpose statement for the magazine adopted by the General Assembly a few years ago: "It [the *Record*] exists to publish issues relative to Christian faith and a selection of current and timely news analyses and opinions of interest or importance to Presbyterians across Canada." These words appear on the masthead of every magazine.

Please note the word "opinions." Several of our *Record* columns are just that — opinions. These include Generation Y, An Everyday God and Vox Populi. I believe it is important, in the interests of truth, that there be an outlet such as the *Record* for Presbyterians to express their opinions. Occasionally, we are wrong, sometimes very wrong; but, on balance, we believe truth is served and God's will discerned through a free press. A free church such as ours requires candour and openness and the opportunity for all its members to express their views if we are to retain our energy, integrity and credibility.

I also believe it is especially important for our young people to have a forum in both the magazine and their congregations where they can openly express their doubts and opinions. Without this, we will lose the majority of them.

Of course, the *Record* always remembers, first and foremost, that it is a Presbyterian and Reformed journal and a servant of the church. I believe that would be clear through any objective reading of the magazine. In fact, some have accused us of being too parochial and Presbyterian and not allowing adequately for the dissemination of other views.

We do provide for the regular proclamation of orthodox Presbyterian views through columns such as Word Alive and a series designed for congregational study and education called Who Is Jesus? starting in Advent. The You Were Asking? column provides authoritative answers to questions about our life and doctrine.

Even if we believed only official Presbyterian views should appear in the magazine, such a goal would not be easy to accomplish. I assure you that what is officially Presbyterian has almost as many interpretations as Presbyterians in Canada. That should not be surprising. To be a member of a Presbyterian church, people are asked to commit to only the bare min-

imum of things — trust in Jesus, a willingness to turn from sin and a commitment to discipleship. (Not even the questions are official.) Members are not asked to believe everything in the Westminster Confession or even what their minister believes. We hope they will seriously consider Presbyterian doctrine and that it will become a part of their lives, but what is required for membership are only the bare necessities of faith held in common by the church over the ages.

**God invests
divine wisdom
in the people of
the church;
in the welter of
many voices,
we will hear
God's voice**

Beyond questions of reflecting correct doctrine, the *Record* has many other responsibilities — collecting and disseminating church news, calling folk to a wider vision and responsibility, confronting demons and providing comfort and hope.

In fact, I still like the way the first editor of the *Record* put it in 1875 when our church was formed. He saw no reason why, he said, "The Presbyterian Church in Canada may not hope to establish a model magazine — one liberal enough to give expression to every shade of opinion consistent with essential principles, catholic enough to commend itself to Christendom and cheap enough to find its way into every Presbyterian family." We are still attempting to fulfil this mandate 125 years later. I continue to believe the vast majority of Presbyterians will not allow an article or column that challenges or angers them to cut them off from the Presbyterian body. The *Record* remains one of the few and vital links that holds us together in one community of faith.

I hope, as well, that, in whatever form it may appear in the future, the magazine will always have the freedom to print minority and non-establishment views. The magazine needs to be a bit adversarial to keep us honest and a bit irreverent at times to keep us humble.

I hope these few words will help the writer who inspired them, and others like him, to reconsider his threat "to write off the *Record*" unless we change our ways. I realize this is only my opinion — but one, I believe, most Presbyterians accept.

John Congram

Volume CXXIII, No. 4

April 1999

ISSN 0032-7573

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Published on the first of each month except August by The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

The *Presbyterian Record*, national magazine of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, is responsible to the General Assembly. It exists to publish issues relative to Christian faith and a selection of current and timely news analyses and opinions of interest or importance to Presbyterians across Canada.

Member of The Canadian Church Press and The Associated Church Press.

Publications Mail Registration No. 0264

Postage paid at Mississauga, Ontario.

Return postage guaranteed.

Send label only.

Subscription Rates

Individual: \$15

Every Home Plan (80% families subscribe): \$9

Club 50 Plan (50% families subscribe): \$11

U.S.A. and Foreign: \$20

Single Copies: \$2

All prices include GST.

Acceptance of advertising does not imply endorsement by the *Presbyterian Record* or The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Address all correspondence and changes of address (include label from magazine) to:

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FROM THE MODERATOR

William
Klempa



Do You Believe This?

A friend of mine who is an American theological professor invariably asks first-year theological students if they believe Jesus actually rose from the dead. He then tells them that, if they do not believe Jesus was raised from the dead, they should not think of proceeding on to become ministers of the Christian gospel. The Christian faith, he explains, has its centre in the conviction that Jesus, who was crucified and buried, rose again from the dead. If they do not believe this, they have no business becoming Presbyterian ministers.

Central to Christian faith is the proclamation of the death and resurrection of Jesus

A common misunderstanding of Christianity is that it is, essentially, a recipe for living a good life, or a therapeutic help for what ails us psychologically or spiritually or, again, that its centre lies in a passionate concern for social justice. While all of these are important, they are not central. "It was not the morality of the Sermon on the Mount which enabled Christianity to conquer Roman paganism," Ernest Bloch, a German philosopher observed, "but the belief that Jesus had been raised from the dead."

Christianity is, essentially, a proclamation of Jesus' death and resurrection. In John's account (John 11) of the raising of Lazarus from the dead, Jesus said to Martha, the sister of Lazarus: "I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die." He then asked her, "**Do you believe this?**" Martha affirmed, in a confession that is parallel to Peter's confession in Matthew 16:16: "Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world" (John 11:27). What is clear from this confession is that faith in Jesus as the Son of God is inseparably linked with the belief that he is "the resurrection and the life."

If Christianity is, as I have argued, a proclamation of Jesus' death and resurrection, it is also the affirmation that "... our Saviour Jesus Christ ... has broken the power of death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (II Timothy 1:10).

Of all the issues we have to face, death is still the most serious of all. The wit who said our last enemy is not death but the person who composes our obituary notice was clever but also psychologically defensive. The human situation is marked by the brevity of life and the certainty of death. Death poses the great threat; it is, indeed, the last enemy. Death threatens to reduce all our human activities, our thinking and doing, our loving and caring to meaningless finality and waste.

Our contemporary culture seeks to evade this uncomfortable truth. The most common way of escaping it, as Rollo May, Ernest Becker and others have noted, is our obsession with sex. If, for the Victorian age, the word "sex" was obscene and unmentionable, it is the word "death" for our age. "The clamour of sex all about us," Rollo May said, "drowns out the ever-waiting presence of death." To be sure, this obsession is not the only way of covering up our fear of death. We find other ways, particularly our absorption in the things of this world to the exclusion of any thought of a world to come.

Cover up death, we may; but, finally, to evade it, we cannot. Karl Barth has somewhere commented on the significance of the word "buried" in the Apostles' Creed.

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Centre photo: the Jeffray pork farm near Belmore, Ontario.

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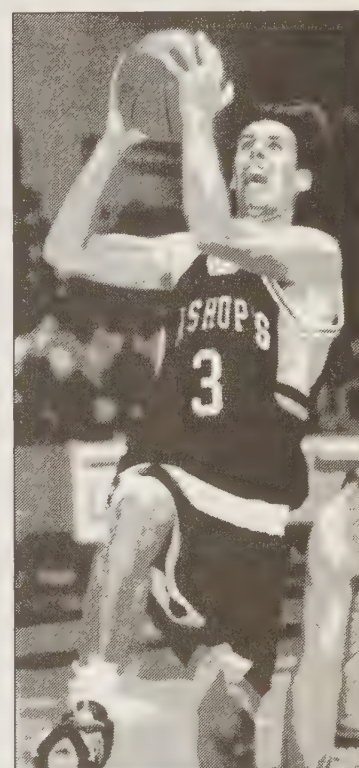
28 Resurrection at Dorothy Lake

Marianne Ashbourne

A place to take your family in the summer



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Sex Without Marriage

I applaud your panelists for a frank and timely discussion ("Sex Without Marriage," February *Record*). However, my own experience has been that young people are more sophisticated than the article suggests. Unless we are willing to engage teens in candid and honest discussion about the risks of premarital sex (e.g., pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases, impact on future relationships) as well as the pros and cons of all the options available, preaching abstinence will be ineffective. Young people need to take ownership of their decisions. They will choose a program such as "True Love Waits" on its own merits.

We must also draw the distinction between a marriage and a wedding (I highly recommend *From Beginning to End: The Rituals of Our Lives* by Robert Fulghum). Ideally, a couple will have forged a covenant relationship some time before going public at the front of a church. In an age when so many marriages end in divorce, perhaps we should worry less about the day when the paperwork is signed and more about values such as trust and commitment.

Paul Miller,
Oakville, Ont.

I consulted the late 16th-century minutes of a Scottish presbytery immediately after reading the sex section in the February *Record*. Cohabitation before marriage then, while not generally blessed by the Kirk, was at least tolerated. However, failure to make good on the promise to marry would bring down the wrath of the Kirk upon the guilty party. This seems to be a vital issue here.

Marriage is indisputably an affirmation of mutual love and respect. In some cultures, it is considered logical for it to follow a period of cohabitation. The old Kirk recognized that God's people do not necessarily do things in the prescribed order; but, provided the right things were done eventually, the Kirk accepted it within their understanding of biblical authority.

I have to admit my personal revulsion for most television has protected me from the programs discussed. It would disturb me, too, if casual sexual activity among teenagers were promoted. How

should the church approach this? We have the opportunity to influence a small proportion of the population through our church's understanding of God's will, so it had better be realistic. Maybe abstinence does make the heart grow fonder, but teaching and exemplifying the values

of love and respect is more direct and more meaningful. That teaching is applicable to sexuality for all ages as well as to almost every other activity in life. The authority for that teaching is as clear as the Ten Commandments can be.

Perhaps, the right approach is a holistic one. Sexuality is not a separate aspect of our lives to be considered in isolation; it is part of that blend of spirituality and humanity that the book of Genesis describes.

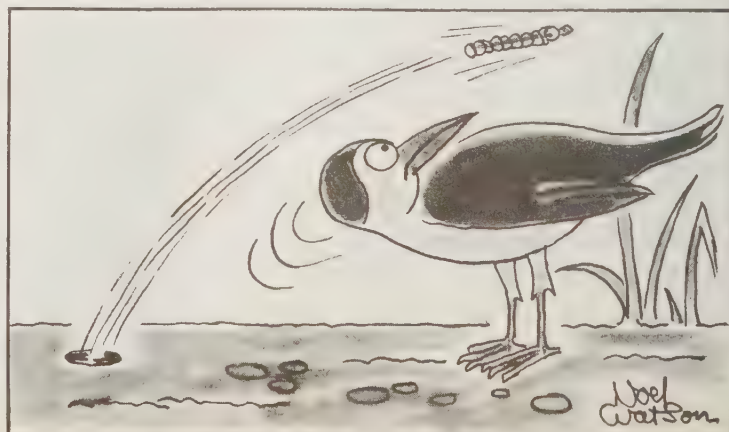
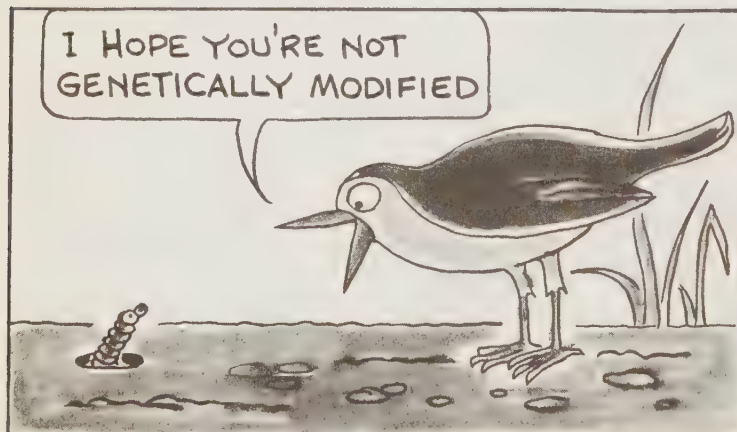
Andrew F. H. Foster,
Cambridge, Ont.

We publish as many letters as possible. All are subject to editing for meaning and space, and must include the correspondent's name and address. Letters are intended to provide for the wide expression of views among our readers. Publication does not imply endorsement by either the *Record* or The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

I blushed when I read "Sex Without Marriage." But not because of salacious language. My embarrassment came from

WATSON'S WORLD

Noel Watson



reading what the panel said about the whole issue of sexuality, specifically as it relates to mature adults in a committed relationship before marriage. I pose a few questions:

1. Why does the panel not discuss sexual activity in terms of love, passion, relationship, maturity and commitment instead of as isolated, clinical acts rationally discussed?
2. Does the panel differentiate between sex involving two mature adults in love, engaged to be married, and sexual activity involving a couple on a first date or a prostitute and her "john"?
3. Does the panel realize current statistics reveal that many in the youth group mentioned in the first question are *already* sexually active?
4. Why does the panel discuss sexual activity in isolation from issues of power-sharing, conflict resolution, family of origin issues and anger in relationships?
5. "A good Christian marriage has some profound possibilities for people in terms of enriching their lives," one panelist comments. Readers need to hear specifically what those possibilities are.
6. What Scriptures does the panel use as the point of origin for the terms "God's principles," "Christian principles" and "the stance of the church"?
I feel sad when couples come to me to get married, scared and anxious because of the shame and judgment they expect me to dump on them on behalf of the church.

Alan Stewart,
Toronto

Affirmed

I felt affirmed by the article "How Do You Say Goodbye?" (February *Record*). Having lost my father in January '99, I questioned myself as to how much more we could have done during his eight-month dying process. I had feelings of regret and anger regarding my own inadequacy in dealing with the situation.

The article has given me some peace in accepting what we (my eight brothers

and sisters and I) did for him. Each, in his or her own way, comforted, accepted, loved and made his final few months on earth as respectful and dignified as we could. I guess that is part of what he instilled in us. It is a measure of our father that all his offspring were by his side during his last months.

Mike Mundell,
Inverary, Ont.

Is It Really Good News?

In the January News, the Assembly Council announced a surplus of about one million dollars for the last fiscal year (1998) and that it anticipates another \$750,000 will become available in 1999. This is good news and worth sharing.

However, these surpluses do not reflect increased generosity on the part of Presbyterians and congregations across the country. They are the result of a change in the formula for funding the church's pension fund. Recent years have been good to the pension fund. Investment returns have increased its value to the point where it is believed funds from Presbyterians Sharing... are no longer needed.

Looking at the larger financial picture of the church, we confront a different story. In the past 10 years, total revenues have increased by 46 per cent. In the same period, increased givings to Presbyterians Sharing... went up only 21 per cent. (Stipends paid to ministers increased 35 per cent over the past decade.)

If contributions to Presbyterians Sharing... had kept pace with total contributions to the church, the actual dollar increase would have been nearly \$1.75 million higher. Think of what could be done with that kind of money plus the million-dollar surplus recently announced.

Is it not time our people were challenged to be more supportive of Presbyterians Sharing... and the ministries supported by the national church, especially its missions. Over the past 10 years, how many important projects have been turned down or deferred by lack of funds?

Cedric Pettigrew,
Ottawa

Tears fill

his eyes as I read him the note. His health has been ruined by alcohol and by street-living, but his generous nature still shows through. A volunteer has asked her prayer group to pray for him, knowing that only God can change his life now. One of the members of the prayer group has written him a note, assuring him that God loves him and that she is praying for him. "I know," he tells me. "I know God loves me, but the Other One keeps getting in the way." Knowing that someone cares for us and is praying for us is important.

If you would like to hear more about our people and programs, please complete the form below and mail to:

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So, now we have a surplus (\$1.75 million no less)! I will refrain from voicing questions of incredulity regarding the simple rationale offered for this great boon (the change in pension funding). However, I was intrigued that, in the suggestions for possible uses, none indicated we offer the surplus to pay off some of the debts we hope the nations of the G-8 Summit will generously agree to write off (see the Jubilee campaign). Is this an example of the left hand not knowing what the right is doing?

*Ian Shaw,
Winnipeg*

Persons First

I cringed once again when I saw the cover of the January '99 *Record* and the title page with bold lettering on the article: "Disciple to the Disabled."

We are people first, not merely a collective disabled. The label "the disabled" focuses on our inabilities; whereas, we focus on our abilities and the fact we are all individuals. We should be seen as persons first!

I am a person first, not simply a brain injury.

*Susan Ginn,
Hamilton, Ont.*

In Memoriam

In November 1998, the 96-year-old Nashville Presbyterian Church closed. Many of us found it difficult to celebrate the end of our beloved landmark. Two ministers from our congregation became professors at Montreal and Toronto. Missionaries left here to serve in China and India. A diaconal worker was raised here, as well as many laypeople. As we celebrate the lives of folk gone before us, we say farewell with tears to the gathering place of several generations.

*Ruth Agar,
Kleinburg, Ont.*

Clone It!

I was intrigued to read of Paulette Brown's courageous response to the tragic news of subway killings in Toronto (February *Record*). I am afraid, however, that too many Presbyterians reading about

the "Created for Life" initiative will forget it quickly, thinking it is only intended for Afro-Canadian congregations in Toronto.

There are a few exceptions (such as St. Andrew's, Lindsay, Ontario) but, when we look at the aging and declining membership rolls of many Euro-Canadian congregations in the rest of the country, we should also experience a sense of shock at the "wave of premature [spiritual] deaths that rolls over our community, holding our children captive to non-productive [spiritual] life-styles ... and locking them up in [spiritual] prisons ..."

I agree with Brown that "the liturgies, the preaching, the singing, the Bible studies, the social programs — all must be interrupted because the Body of Jesus Christ [as manifested in the Presbyterian Church] is in deep trouble." Until we see transformation in Presbyterian congregations, confirmation will continue to be the end of the faith journey, rather than the beginning. Our children are dying premature spiritual deaths and the denomination is not far behind.

The first task of the new Moderator when elected in June should be to meet with Paulette Brown and discuss how her "Created for Life" initiative could be cloned to the benefit of the whole denomination.

*Robert W. Moore,
Lindsay, Ont.*

Schools and Religion

Having been educated in a Protestant boarding school, I can see the advantages of government-funded religious schools (January *Record*). I am acutely aware of the gaps in the current system that relegates Christian education to the church and home. At my school, the Bible was a textbook on which we were examined. In addition to daily morning and evening worship, the school provided hymn practice, confirmation classes and Sunday school, and required Sunday attendance at the local church.

Christian youth in Ontario's public schools today receive mere scraps of Christian teaching. At church, they are offered, but not required, to take regular instruction in their beliefs and traditions.

And how many parents are equipped or have the time to provide Christian education? Required courses in public schools are not integrated with Christian knowledge and teachers may not hold or model Christian values, let alone support Christian beliefs.

In Quebec, the inter-church Protestant organization Christian Direction works with the Ministry of Education "to meet the spiritual needs" of students. With 50 per cent government funding, Christian Direction places chaplains in public schools where they "model Christian values and serve as a spiritual resource to students and staff without actually opening a Bible or leading groups in prayer." Christian Direction also runs after-school centres where children receive "care in a spiritual context" and get help with homework and where parents and the community are involved in the activities. I believe the situation in Ontario calls for equally creative initiatives.

*Joyce Gladwell,
Elmira, Ont.*

A Mission Mind-Set

Being involved in ministry to children, I am always drawn to articles and events that highlight a facet of a children's ministry such as "An Idea That's Grown Like Hotcakes" by Nancy Rouble (January *Record*). The commitment of the leaders to involve children in a ministry that is beyond themselves impressed me. Having a Valentine pancake brunch for eight years running, that supports a variety of community needs, not only benefits the recipients but also helps to create a mission mind-set in children at an early age.

*Gerry McCall,
Burlington, Ont.*

Complete Sentences and Oxford

Kathy Cawsey writes interesting and thought-provoking articles. I was thoroughly enjoying "The Comfort of Tradition" (February *Record*), comparing Judaism and Presbyterianism, laughing about "vague fondness for kilts and bagpipes," etc. when I suddenly realized that what I was reading was NOT A SEN-

TENCE! A small slip, I thought. As I read on, three more hit me in the face! A student at Oxford who writes as well as Kathy does needs to be sure she is using sentences (remember, nouns and verbs?) rather than phrases!

*Jean Lawrence,
West Vancouver*

Editor's note: *In the same way poets take poetic licence and artists paint impressions, writers use various word structures to present their thoughts. Even incomplete sentences. This is an accepted style today.*

The Success of Pacifism

The letters on pacifism and just war (January *Record*) assume pacifism is ineffective when the enemy, such as the Nazis during the Second World War, is determined and brutal. However, had there been a concerted attempt throughout Europe to make Nazi-occupied territories ungovernable through passive resistance,

I believe it would have succeeded.

Since the Second World War, we have learned more about the effectiveness of pacifism in resisting tyranny. One of the great stories of our century is the defeat of the apartheid regime in South Africa — a regime that certainly equalled the Nazis in its determination and brutality. We have also seen the success of the American civil rights movement, the downfall of several dictatorships (Marcos, Duvalier, Pinochet), and the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe — all by peaceful means.

Pacifism is seldom as ineffective as your correspondents think. Greater attention to the successes of pacifism might keep us from prematurely concluding that violence is our only choice.

*Gail Turner,
Toronto*

Good and Bad Controversy

I try hard to read and enjoy Kathy Cawsey's columns every month. She makes

many excellent points. I admire her honesty. But certain statements sadden me.

If she were debating infant vs. adult baptism, the role of women in the church, various views of Holy Communion among denominations, I could agree or disagree without being saddened. The faith does not stand or fall on these issues. It is different to refute or to call into question the existence of heaven or the devil.

Couldn't the editor add a tactful note indicating that the Presbyterian Church doesn't necessarily agree with all these points? Or, maybe, add another Generation Y columnist to debate both sides of an issue? Or, could other columnists respond to the controversy in articles?

Some controversy is good. But controversy about central Christian beliefs that is left unanswered and unresolved can be divisive and damaging to the Body of Christ.

*Janis MacKenzie,
St. Andrew's, N.B.*

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Gateway is a congregation of 70 households who provide active community leadership (although a number live outside the Flemingdon Park area). We share a joint Worship Centre seating 400 people with John XXIII Roman Catholic Parish and share community outreach involvement with the Flemingdon Park Anglican Ministry. We celebrate Communion monthly, hold special Holy Week, Christmas, year-end and family-oriented worship experiences. Since the 1970s, our session has endorsed term eldership and we follow a commission system based on the LAMP Report. We have a small choir and church school.

Please contact our Interim Moderator,
Rev. Robert Syme at Gateway Community Church
150 Gateway Blvd., DON MILLS, Ontario M3C 3E2
Telephone: (416) 699-3912 Facsimile: (416) 467-8262
E-mail: valdunn@ibm.net



It's Easier to Tell the Truth

I was backing out of the parking space in the store lot. Through the rear window, I saw a white pickup truck coming down the lane between rows of parked cars. So I stopped, waiting to see if it would stop, or turn into another space, or go on by on the other side. It did none of these three. It kept on coming. Bang! Right into the back end of my little red sports car.

"I'm so sorry," bumbled the driver when she got out of the car. (This is not intended as a criticism of women drivers who generally have better driving records than men.) "I meant to put my foot on the brake but I must have hit the gas instead."

We exchanged the necessary information: names, driver's licences, vehicle licences ...

"It's my fault," she said. "I'll take the responsibility."

Two weeks later, I received a call from the insurance adjuster. "The other driver claims the accident was your fault," the adjuster charged. "She says you backed out of a parking space into her."

I was outraged. It was a lie. It was a betrayal. But, most shattering of all, I could see where it would lead. Having lied, she would have to continue to lie to support the initial lie. I could see a chain of interlocked lies stretching away to infinity. Fortunately, for me, she did recant.

I don't know why she lied initially. Perhaps, her husband forced her. Perhaps, she had other reasons. But, like all lies, once started, a lie eats away at everything around it. To defend that lie, other lies have to be told. Details have to be invented. Inconsistencies have to be explained away.

It's hard on the memory, too. You have to remember what version of the truth you've told to what person. After a while, you can't admit that you lied. You'd lose face, for one thing. But, more seriously, you'd have to untangle all the lies you've already told to conceal the first lie. And, once you change your story, you destroy your credibility — if you do tell the truth, who will believe it? Lies inevitably perpetuate themselves.

A lie, of any kind, escalates as quickly as a computer's hard disk cannibalizing itself. As Sir Walter Scott said, "Oh, what a tangled web we weave, when first we practise to deceive." And if that can happen with a relatively simple little lie, imagine what can happen with, say, insider trading on the stock market. Or bribery in international trade negotiations. Or election promises. Or, perhaps, spicing up a few gold samples from Indonesia.

By contrast, honesty is so simple. There's only one story to remember.

It's the same story for everyone.

That's why I believe the stories of Jesus' resurrection. Here were people telling an absolutely preposterous story. A friend of theirs had been executed like a common criminal. Everyone had seen him hanging on a cross by the main road out of town. Everyone knew no one ever came down alive from a Roman cross.

But, now, his disciples claimed he had risen from the grave. They had seen him, talked with him, eaten with him. He had broken bread and cooked fish. They had touched him — put disbelieving fingers into wounds that

had not yet healed. And they claimed he was still with them, in Spirit. They didn't offer explanations. They didn't attempt to rationalize away the inconsistencies. They told their experience as they understood it, and they stuck to it.

They must have encountered incredible scepticism. They must have been tempted to embroider their stories, to offer some inventive solutions, to white-wash the disgrace of the Crucifixion. But they didn't. To their credit, they stuck to the same hard-to-believe story through ridicule, prison, torture ... "For we were witnesses to his resurrection," writes John in one of his letters. And Paul affirms, "We preach Christ crucified, foolishness to the Jews and folly to the Greeks ..."

Because they told the truth they knew, they didn't have to keep track of any tangled web of deception. That made life so much simpler. **[E]**

Jim Taylor is a writer, editor and co-founder of Wood Lake Books.

From *Alpha* to Omega: Reconverting Canada to Christianity

Rod Lamb

The costliest mistake ever made by The Presbyterian Church in Canada has been our failure to take adequate steps to pass the Christian faith on to the next generation. There are complicated reasons for this mistake, but simple consequences.

For the majority of those now under 35, religion has no effect on their lives. Despite what the polls may indicate, committed and consistent Christian worship across the nation does not exist. We have become a secular people.

Given the advantages we possessed since the beginning of 1950, this is a remarkable achievement. Never before in the history of the Christian Church, never mind Presbyterian, have so many people passed through its ranks thanks to the post-war baby boom. Never before have so many churches been built, babies baptized and young people confirmed. But where are they now?

They are gone. And they have left behind increasingly empty pews and boards of managers, as well as sessions wondering how much longer they can keep the doors open. Despite all the money, people and enthusiasm, we have blown it.

Now, however, we can begin again with a user-friendly, entry-level Christian program called *Alpha*. It began in Holy Trinity Brompton Church, West London, England, through the Anglican Church. From this humble beginning, it has spread across that city, the country and into every nation in the world. It is offered in churches, houses, schools, prisons — anywhere two or more people may gather. It is also available in the Finnish, Polish, Swahili, Dutch, Russian and Arabic languages. The *Alpha* show has become world-wide with a cast of thousands.

Of course, it has critics. Not every Christian, not least of all Anglicans,

thinks it is the cat's meow. There are many who are not excited about its middle-class, Bible-based, evangelical Christian conservatism. But it is an unqualified success. Never has there been such an effective tool for spreading the gospel.

Basically, *Alpha* is a series of videos spread over 11 weeks with a day apart in the middle. Church members are encouraged to invite friends and family to the first local meeting. There, they are greeted warmly, offered a meal and shown a video in a room decorated for the purpose. The meeting then splits into groups to discuss what they have viewed. After that, they go home. It is deceptively simple.

In fact, little is left to chance. There is a discreet presence of volunteers — the *Alpha* "team" — who mingle with the visitors and steer the small discussion groups. The opening talks follow established paths, even including the same jokes called "*Alpha*-bits." Team members are told how to encourage participation in the groups and how never, for instance, to treat a question as stupid or offensive. Even chair arrangements and room decorations are carefully monitored. It is not unlike the commercial launch of a new product by a slick public relations firm.

In a world used to high-powered company promotions and glossy mass media presentations, none of these techniques is unwarranted. Indeed, they may well be what modern people need if they are to take the rest seriously. These techniques make the Church seem professional, competent, self-confident and up-to-date.

There are, indeed, psychological techniques applied during an *Alpha* course, but few people say they feel pressured. It

is cool — a good deal below the temperature of, say, a traditional Billy Graham rally.

Peer-group pressure is one of the strongest factors counting against religion in a secular society. *Alpha* cleverly reverses it so that those taking part feel they

are going with the drift if they are moving toward religion rather than away from it. The company is warm and the humour slightly irreverent. Whatever else they get from their evening, it is a positive social experience. But it only looks casual: it has all been carefully fine-tuned.

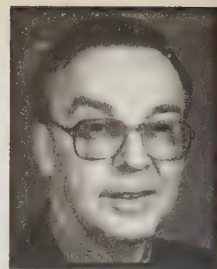
The content of an *Alpha* course is basic Christianity, simply explained: there is heaven and hell, the devil exists, the tomb was empty, the Bible is true. But there is also a refreshing open-endedness — this is not the whole story, there is room for debate, you can find out more, and so on.

It is also thoroughly ecumenical, with an unwritten no-poaching rule. What is distinctively evangelical about it, but entirely appropriate in this post-modern, post-Diana age, is the emphasis on the person of Jesus and the possibility of a loving relationship with him. This is where the emotional and spiritual hunger gnaws most fiercely in contemporary society. And this, even more than the smooth professionalism of the presentation, is why *Alpha* is so effective. It is an idea whose time is long overdue. **R**

The *Alpha* program provides an avenue to revitalize the church

For information on *Alpha*, contact: the Canadian office, Sally Start, 1-604-224-0067; the North American office (toll free) 1-888-949-2574; or visit the *Alpha* Web site at www.alphana.org.

Rod Lamb is minister of Petawawa Church and Point Alexander Church in Petawawa, Ont.



Forgiving Debts Is Going too Far!

Leviticus 25:8-17, 23-30; Luke 4:16-21

Outrageous and foolish and costly! Besides that, Leviticus Chapter 25 is not even in the lectionary! On the other hand, the lectionary should be noted for what it leaves out as much as for what it includes in its three-year cycle of readings.

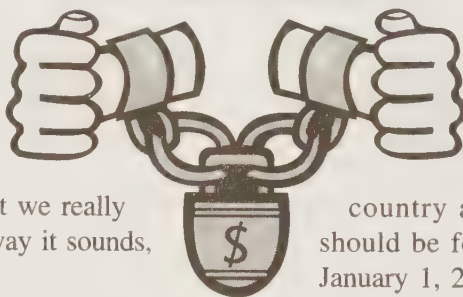
Some people have been reading the unlikely book of Leviticus. Among its various cultic and religious laws, they found this passage that suggests the forgiveness of debts. The follow-up to this is the strong recommendation that the year 2000 be known as a Jubilee year. With the advent of the new millennium, it is argued, Third World debts should be cancelled. (We do pray "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors," but we really don't mean that the way it sounds, do we?)

So what is the Jubilee year? Literally, it is the year of the ram's horn, the *yobel*, which comes to us in English as "Jubilee." Priests blew the ram's horn only on special occasions. The blast of the horn was credited with knocking down the walls of Jericho — which is a whole lot like knocking down Wall Street or attacking Bay Street.

The Jubilee as a Sabbath of Sabbaths was to occur every 50 years; that is, the end of seven times seven years. There was to be a general emancipation of the inhabitants and the land. Fields were to lay fallow and, except for houses in the walled cities, ancestral property was to be returned. (One did not buy the land but bought so many harvests.) Defaulting debtors and Israelite slaves were to be set

free. The basis for this activity was the acknowledgement that the land could not be sold absolutely because it belongs to God. They couldn't sell what didn't belong to them. Israelites could not be kept in slavery for they were the servants (slaves) of God who brought them out of Egypt.

The idea of Jubilee arises from the Bible's least read books



Some well-intentioned people out there have come across this passage. Let us acknowledge it plainly suggests that, every 50 years, all debts should be forgiven and everyone who owned property that was "sold" should get the property back — at least, if it is property outside the walled gates of a city. These same people have the notion that, if your country owes my country an immense debt, it should be forgiven on or before January 1, 2000. They even think that you, dear reader, might be persuaded to sign a petition to this effect. Let Canada, the petition argues, cancel the loans owed to us by Third World countries.

Let us note the word "Jubilee" occurs once in Numbers and 19 times in Leviticus. In other words, it does not occur with great frequency or over a wide spectrum of biblical books. On the other hand, the *idea* of the Jubilee year influenced the prophets. Even more significantly, it influenced Jesus who began his public ministry quoting Isaiah 61. This proclamation states Jesus' intent to enact the Jubilee:

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."

In this passage, Jesus announced he was ushering in the Jubilee year — good news to the poor, release to the captives, sight for the blind and freedom for the oppressed. It sounds like a new and different economic order. Perhaps the cancelling of Third World debts does fit into this scheme. And, if those who lead us on this issue are crazy, they are in the company of the saints.

Maybe this idea of Jubilee, one of the visionary aspects or elements of the Bible, still needs to be spoken. It needs to be spoken as part of Jesus' announcement of the dawn of a new era. It needs to be spoken that we join other Christians in recognizing that the world's resources are not ours to keep but ours to share. The world is not ours to own but ours on loan. It needs to be spoken because it is gospel — unusual economic and political good news for the world. **R**

For Discussion and Reflection

- If it is true the gospel is counter-culture, in what ways would the Jubilee change the culture in which we live?
- If we assume the measure of all things ("the bottom line") is economic, how does this relate to Jesus' words in Luke 4:16-21?
- What do you mean when you pray "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors"?

L. E. (Ted) Siverns is the minister of First Church in New Westminster, B.C.

My dear editor:

In the two decades following WWII, the halcyon days of church growth and rapid extension of the city, North Park Presbyterian, under the then-youthful and slimmer Rev. J. Paddyngton Bayer, sought larger facilities in which to worship. St. George Anglican filled both needs. When its members began to flee to more pastoral, suburban surroundings, the diocese decided to follow, discretely putting St. George up for sale, preferably to another church. Knowing a bargain when they saw one, North Park snapped it up.

There never was much parking, even in its Church of England days. It was the kind of congregation where people strolled leisurely to church or had their chauffeurs drop them off and pick them up.

J.P. rather hoped it would remain that way; and, for a while, it seemed likely. (Hence the "other" name for his congregation — GNP.) But, alas, it was not to be.

The congregation remains wealthy, but the neighbourhood is no longer one of shaded mansions glimpsed over manicured lawns and through privacy hedges from tree-lined streets. GNP is surrounded by office towers and several high-rise condos offering "gracious living" that does not seem to include going to church.

Parking is scarce, and GNP's 20 spaces are coveted. Twelve are rented by the month, and the waiting list for a spot is said to be longer than Methuselah's family tree. Two are left for handicapped parking, one for "members on church business" and the other five for staff.

The whole business is a perpetual worry. At one point, the board of managers, tired of coping with 20 flavours of outrage and with an eye to a hefty increase in revenue, proposed that the lawn and flowerbeds on one side of the church be paved over. That idea was put to rest when two members of the Lawns and Flowers Guild chained themselves, one to a large maple and the other to the Monument to the Unknown Presbyterian. (Actually, "tied" is more appropriate than "chained.") They used the ornamental ropes that were tied across the stair-

ways leading to the galleries.) The unknown Presbyterian is really Robbie Burns; but, shortly after the monument was commissioned, several of the more sensitive members actually *read* something written by and about the poet. In any case, the gesture made quite a splash in the local news.

The problem of parking poachers has been addressed in several unsuccessful ways. A retired member of the congregation was given the task of policing the lot. He took the term "policing" literally. He would hide in a convenient spot and, when he spotted an unfamiliar car pulling in, he would leap out, stand with his legs braced apart, clutching his ticket book in both hands straight out in front of him. Sighting along it, he shouted "Freeze!" and "Spread 'em!" Not only were his orders contradictory, they scared the living daylight out of more than one poor soul; for example, the mother of the assistant minister who was visiting from out of town.

One ingenious scheme involved punching a code on a machine that, if incorrect or unpunched, would activate a plate of iron spikes behind the wheels of the trespassing auto. It was dismissed as too expensive to install and, perhaps, lethal to more than the church's image.

But the real problem involved J.P. himself and the owner of an always new, always silver Porsche — a decidedly more expensive and more expensive *looking* car than his own. In the winter, this man's parking spot was under a junction in the eaves over the back wall. Under the right conditions, a huge and menacing icicle would form. When that happened, he would take J.P.'s spot.

They had him ticketed once, but he paid with a money order in Lithuanian currency drawn on the Bank of Hong Kong. It cost them much more than the

ticket was worth and a near-resignation from the church treasurer.

Despite the "Park Here and You Preach" sign, the Porsche man refused to risk an icicle dent. J.P. wanted to change the sign to "Park Here and Burn in Hell!" but the board thought the suggestion unsuitable in tone and theologically.

Growing desperate at this affront to his dignity, J.P. borrowed a trick from an old Eddie Murphy movie he had seen in a "Film and Faith" course. One dark, late afternoon, he stuffed a banana up the exhaust pipe. When the garage found the problem, the Porsche man had a piece of steel mesh secured to prevent a recurrence. He had his suspicions; but, by the time the banana was found, fingerprints were

out of the question.

J.P. took to coming in early, at about 6 a.m. This meant all evening meetings were an ordeal and no fun for him. But even that didn't work. The Porsche man must have had some flunky watching from the tower. As soon as J.P. backed out in his Buick, he would slip the silver intruder into the vacated spot.

The board of managers was frantically trying to draw up a new parking contract with provisions for icicles and other acts of God when the matter came to a sunny conclusion. The weather turned warm, and the icicle was reduced to harmless proportions. However, as both men, meeting by chance, were glaring over their respective hoods and getting out their car keys, about 30 centimetres of wet, slushy snow slid off the length of the steep roof at some volume. No damage was done to the cars, but a couple of rather expensive hats needed attention.

Yours for seeing justice done,

Peter Plymley II

DOWN ON THE FARM

The Reality of Rural Living

by John Clement

Market price 1988 → \$167
1999 → \$40!!

75% decrease

Mkt. price \$40
Raise/ship hog \$130

\$90 LOSS

Mortgage
remaining
equity

Feed
Equipment
Housing
Shipping

\$130 per hog



Government aid
\$40 million
÷ 6000 producers
= \$7000
not enough

Hog prices down 75%

ag same

Mkt. price \$40

\$90 LOSS

Equity

20 years work

Life on many family farms today has become a desperate struggle for survival

Income
+ Equity
- Mortgages
- Loans
- Expenses
= LOSS

Many people think life on the farm is idyllic. A slower pace, fresh air and green pastures are all popular images of rural living.

The problem is, that image doesn't always fit. And it doesn't even come close to the reality faced by some Canadian farmers over the past year. For them, price crashes of monumental proportions have taken the rosy hues out of any portrait of life in the country.

Farm income in Canada is expected to be down 26 per cent compared to the five-year average. But that aggregate number is deceiving. Some special crops are doing well: dairy, poultry and some parts of the livestock industry. Cereal grains and hogs, however, have been hit hard by price declines.

The situation faced by Ontario hog producers is a case in point. Market prices in Ontario for the latter half of last year and the early part of 1999 have been well below the cost to produce a hog. In fact, in only six months, the price for a market hog went from about \$167 to below \$40. For a typical farm, the cost of raising and shipping a hog at the latter price was almost \$90 more than it captured at the marketplace. The prices are the worst that hog farmers have seen since the Great Depression of the 1930s.

The problem of low hog prices is partly cyclical and partly structural. Hog prices tend to rise and fall over a four-year cycle. But that typical cycle of supply and demand has been thrown out-of-whack across North America by some major changes taking place among the buyers that process the hogs. In fact, the amount of space available to process hogs has shrunk at roughly the same time as more hogs came to market.

In a nutshell, processing companies have been busy buying each other out, closing older, inefficient slaughterhouses, and renegotiating labour contracts. And to top matters off, Asia's currency crisis of last year is said by some to have slowed some growth in pork exports. All in all, the experts say these conditions will depress the hog market for several months to come. And that spells continued trouble for family-worked farms that produce the majority of Ontario's hogs.

How the Farm Crisis Affects One Farm: Reflections of a Hog Producer

(This article was written and sent to two members of the Ontario legislature by Wilma Jeffray who, along with her husband, Ross, and their four children, operates a pork farm near Belmore, Ontario.)

We farm a 90-sow, farrow-to-finish operation with a small beef-feeding operation as well. We have expanded the business over the span of 20 years. It has been built from the ground up. "Sacrifice and save" has been the family policy to ensure the growth of the farm business.

At present, we have a remodelled barn as well as a barn built five years ago. These buildings are well-insulated and heated with propane. The pigs are comfortable. However, because of this sacrifice-and-save policy, our family continues to live in a much inferior building, heated with wood to save money.

We never minded making these sacrifices. We chose them so the business could grow. But, here we are now, and it is not a jolly time on this farm.

We've been losing large sums of money on every pig going to market since November 1998 — nearing \$100 per hog. Then, we always made payments on time; two months later, we were at the end of our operating loan with the bank. Because of the decline in prices, the market livestock (which secures the operating loan) doesn't provide enough collateral any more. In order to feed the pigs in our barn, we will have to place another mortgage on the small amount of equity we still have. This equity represents 20 years of work. So, we borrow more.

Our pledge is to repay it over 10 or 15 years and carry on. Our December month-end was \$20,000. We might be able to borrow enough for two or three months maximum. What the market will bring then — who knows? We may have borrowed on the remaining equity and will lose all.

In two short months, we went from running a successful small business, which supported our four children, to a position of possibly losing everything. Even if we survive this crisis, we will have delayed retirement to pay for it.

When you lose your job, you lose only your job. We're in a position of losing our home as well as our business. IT'S DEVASTATING.

When I wake up in the morning, it takes about five seconds for me to start thinking about the headache of hog prices. It feels as though war has been declared on our farm operation. The bombs are made of greed, over-expansion and North American pricing. It has been an unprovoked attack. Hard work and good management will not save us. Ours is one small family farm caught in this mess. What an enormous price to pay for simply farming the wrong commodity at the wrong time in history.

The announced \$40 million in government aid divided by 6,000 producers provides, at best, \$7,000. Simple math indicates how far that will go. At this point, our accountant doesn't think we will qualify.

This is only the financial side of the story. What about the family, and the social and environmental issues of over-expansion? Most family farmers contribute as volunteers in their communities, schools and churches. If we are forced to leave *en masse*, get ready to start funding welfare rolls, retraining programs, abuse counselling, etc. The choice is, spend the money now or later.

This crisis is our ice storm. We need immediate disaster relief. We need enough to bring the losses in the last quarter of '98 to manageable levels.

Wilma Jeffray and her family are members of Knox Church in Belmore, Ont.

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As the crisis in hog prices has deepened, stories have started to emerge about how the hardship is affecting some farm families. One farmer simply closed the doors on his barn and walked away, leaving the pigs to starve. The man simply lost his frame of mind and felt he had no alternatives. Other tales tell of feed bills that are unpaid and Christmas presents that weren't purchased. The worst fears are for those who start withdrawing from community life. Severe financial stress can lead people to abuse their families or themselves. Suicide is not unheard of among farmers during times of financial downturns.

Thankfully, there are some things available to help farmers navigate these difficult times. Governments and farm groups have provided telephone help-lines and counsellors for stress and debt management. And financial aid packages are in the development or delivery stages by governments.

Despite all these services, some farmers still feel a strong need to share their burdens with others. Within the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario (CFFO), we have seen people spontaneously share their struggles with other farmers during structured meetings. It wasn't part of the agenda; it simply happened.

At one meeting I attended, a usually buoyant woman I've known for almost five years broke down in tears as she shared how low hog prices had destroyed the cash flow on her farm and totally changed her plans for retirement. She had little choice but to watch as, month by month, the financial equity she and her husband had built up in their farm slowly dwindled away.

After this woman spoke, a young man with four children under eight years of age rose to tell how he might have to sell his farm in a few months. A progressive farmer with a bright future ahead of him, he told how the bills had simply become too high to continue. Other farmers followed with similar stories.

After they had shared their stories, most farmers felt lighter and actually smiled or laughed. Some shared how these difficult times had forced them to focus more clearly on their families and on the bountiful life they have in Jesus Christ.

The experience of watching these

The Farm Crisis: Can the Church Help?

Wilma Jeffray, who writes in this issue about the pain of being a hog farmer these days, included this note about the support she receives from the Knox Church congregation in Belmore, Ontario: *"These precious people listen, understand and, most important, feel what I tell them. I thank God for their presence. Their quiet, constant presence provides unimaginable strength in seemingly hopeless times. What more could I ask?"*

Do you have a story of what your congregation has done? Or are there things you believe the local congregation, presbytery or national church should be doing in these situations? Write and tell us. We will attempt to include your ideas in a future issue.

farmers share their stories taught our organization a powerful lesson. The concept of mutual self-help is a strong tool for helping people work their way through difficult seasons in life. In essence, it's compassion in action.

Since then, the CFFO has been advocating that our 22 district associations across Ontario consider implementing mutual self-help groups for farmers who want to participate. It's not a cure-all; but it lets farmers know, in a practical way, that others care about them.

For rural churches, a great opportunity exists to minister to hurting farmers in this way. Most churches have meeting facilities, coffee-pots and members willing to reach out with the love of our Lord. These congregations also have an advantage because they usually have members who either farm or are well-connected to the farming community.

For urban churches, an opportunity exists to learn more about how food is produced, and the human stories of struggle that sometimes go into its production. And, in terms of practical actions, there is always room for intercessory prayers for those going through tough times. **R**

John Clement is the general manager of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario. The CFFO has 4,100 members across the province and develops public policy initiatives for agriculture.

Accepting Life's Bounces

by John Congram

A Presbyterian athlete
shares his love of basketball
and his love for God

Joel Sherbino plays guard for the 1998 national college basketball champions: Bishop's Gaiters. The team, from Bishop's University in Lennoxville, Quebec, won that honour a year ago by beating the McMaster Marauders 74 to 71. Surprising to some, the highlight of the day came when Coach Pomykana asked Sherbino to lead the players and coaches in a prayer of thanksgiving for the "magical season of '97-'98."

But his third year at Bishop's did not start out magically for Joel. In fact, he says, it was one of the lowest points in his life. He seriously considered giving up both school and basketball. Relationships gone sour, injuries and tough sledding with schoolwork combined to make him undergo a period of self-evaluation. He asked himself, "Where do I get my worth?"

The experience changed him from being what he describes as a "quiet Chris-

Photo: Perry Beaton



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tian" to one who is not afraid to share his faith. It was at this low point of being tested that he felt touched by the love of God and realized that the most important thing to him was his relationship to God. His value came not through what he did but through God's acceptance and love. "Sure," he says, "I hear the crowd and I play for them and the coach; but, primarily, I play for an audience of one."

Sherbino describes himself as "a Christian who plays basketball." He tries to be the same authentic person both on and off the court. In high school, he kept the two parts of his life separate. But, today, he tries to do whatever he undertakes to the best of his ability and to the glory of God. (And, yes, he still lets the ref know when he thinks he has made a bad call.)

One of the big influences in his life has been his father, David, minister of the Presbyterian church in Woodbridge, Ontario, and a professor at Tyndale College in Toronto. "I have always seen my father as a strong, positive leader — the kind of person I would like to be," he says. One thing he doesn't get from his father is his 6-6 height. "When I'm with my father," he explains, "I have to keep emphasizing that this little short guy is really my father." For his part, David claims he has shrunk over the years.

Last summer, Joel toured India playing basketball with Athletes in Action, a group of Christian athletes who use sports as a way of evangelism. Some of the teams were pretty good, he said, especially in cities such as Bombay. But their greatest test was when they played in Thailand against the national team.

The past two summers, he has worked with the staff at Woodbridge Presbyterian holding seminars and sports programs for local young people. In the long run, he hopes to be a minister like his dad, perhaps emphasizing a ministry to youth using sports. But that will have to wait a few years. This is his final year at Bishop's and, after he graduates, he hopes to play professional basketball in Europe for a few years.

Back at Bishop's, Joel and two other students have started a Sunday evening worship service in the college pub. It gives students who otherwise would never go to church an opportunity to taste worship on their own turf. Doing it

this way makes it accessible and not intimidating to students whose interest is sometimes caught by the very fact of holding worship in a pub.

Joel believes the most important key to reaching young people is acceptance. The greatest gift the church can offer them is the grace of God. He speaks of a friend who has experienced a difficult life, which includes a broken family. She is turned off by religion because she feels judged and criticized when she goes to church. "I feel bad when I leave," she tells him.

"I don't think the church should do that to people," Joel declares.

His advice to young athletes starting out is to try to stay well-rounded. They should question why they are playing the game. Is it something they really want to do because they love the game? Money and fame, according to Sherbino, are not good enough motives. "You can give up everything for your sport," he says. "But, remember, for everyone who succeeds in pro sports, thousands don't make it. Then, if they have not lived a well-rounded life, they will have nothing left."

The recent NBA lock out disappointed him. There may be things he didn't understand, he says, but it looked too much like taking a game that was meant to be fun and exploiting it. He would hate to see basketball go down the same road as baseball. He also says he has noticed diminished enthusiasm among the young for sports and wonders if this relates to the attitudes of some pro athletes.

Meanwhile, Joel has other things to think about — like helping the Gaiters win another national title. It won't be easy. After being ranked first at the beginning of the year, they were ranked sixth by Christmas. With off-court diversions and injuries at the turn of the year, they were second in their own conference. And, as the national champions, he points out, every team makes a special effort to beat the Gaiters.

But, win or lose, Joel Sherbino will come out OK. He knows where the real meaning in life is found — and it is not dependent on winning or losing basketball games. Besides, Joel believes with the Canadian Presbyterian founder of basketball that it is a game designed "to promote clean living and Christianity." **R**



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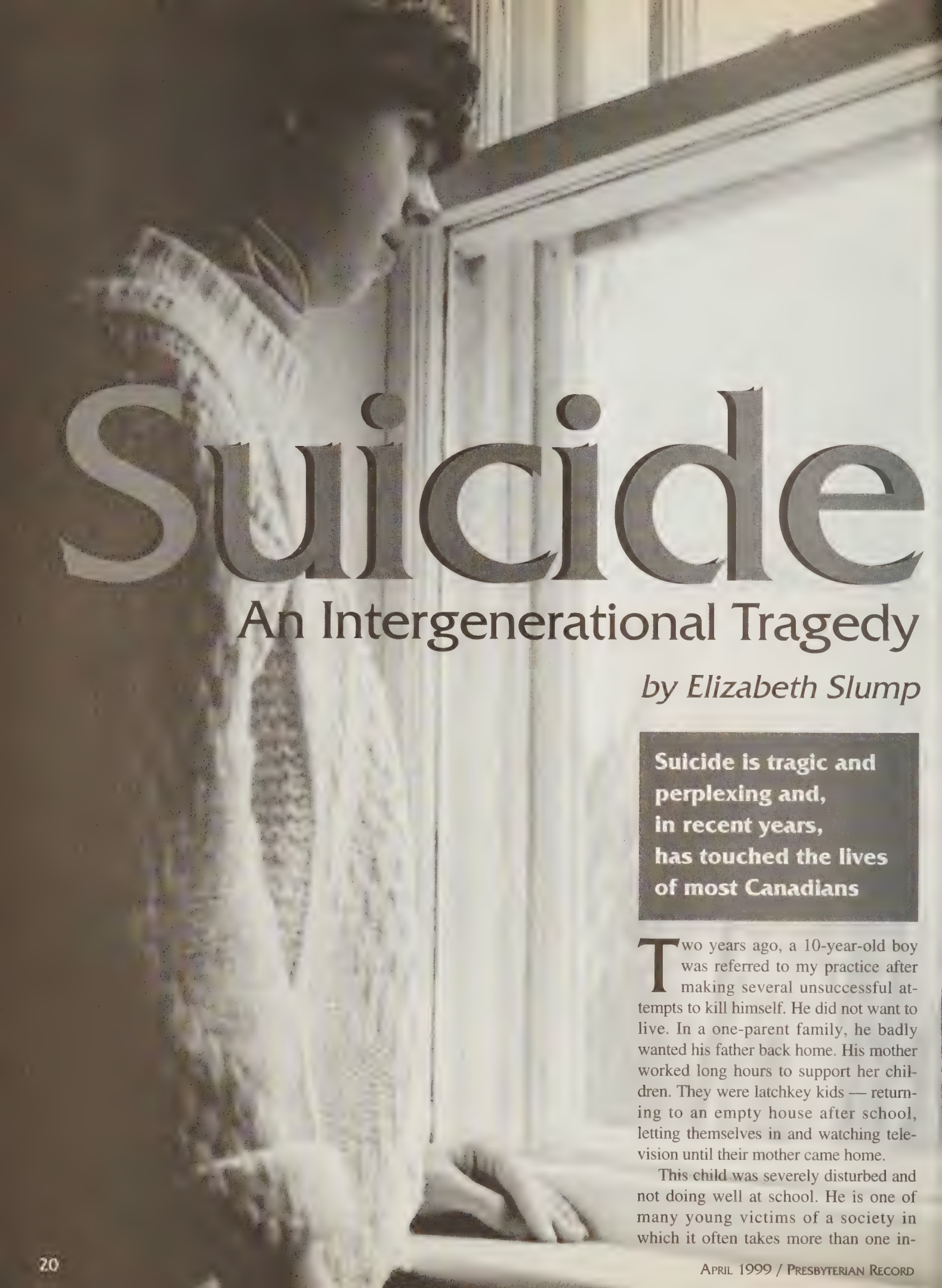
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Suicide

An Intergenerational Tragedy

by Elizabeth Slump

Suicide is tragic and perplexing and, in recent years, has touched the lives of most Canadians

Two years ago, a 10-year-old boy was referred to my practice after making several unsuccessful attempts to kill himself. He did not want to live. In a one-parent family, he badly wanted his father back home. His mother worked long hours to support her children. They were latchkey kids — returning to an empty house after school, letting themselves in and watching television until their mother came home.

This child was severely disturbed and not doing well at school. He is one of many young victims of a society in which it often takes more than one in-

come to survive and where the well-being of children seems to be secondary. In addition to neglect, violence is prevalent in many families. While this child was not in a violent home, he did not receive consistent attention and love.

The often-asked question is, "Why would children want to kill themselves?" The sad reality with many youth is that their lives lack happiness and joy.

Suicide and its effects consume a large proportion of my work as a death educator and grief therapist. Suicide has become intergenerational, claiming the lives of young, middle-aged and elderly. This is shown in the latest statistics from the Suicide Information and Education Centre in Alberta. Rates per 100,000 population for Canadian males are:

- age 15-19: 21.37
- 30-34: 30.85
- 50-54: 29.12
- 70-74: 20.90
- 80-84: 24.08
- 85-89: 36.50.

Rates for the female population are much lower although, among younger females, particularly the 15-19 age group, there appears to be a significant number of successful attempts.

Professionals in the health care field and, more recently, in the death education and grief therapy fields are constantly challenged to identify the triggering factors, prevention and treatment of suicide. Suicidal clients come from every socio-economic level of society. Some of the confused, lonely and often alienated youth and some of the lonely and socially isolated elderly are economically disadvantaged, but others are comfortably established and, even, privileged.

Some years ago, while teaching in a rural Ontario high school, I developed a death education curriculum in conjunction with the family studies curriculum. A major component of the course was a unit on suicide. Students learned about the warning signs — what to look for when they think a person is suicidal. They also learned about coping strategies and how to deal with the pain if a suicide occurs.

During one class, someone knocked on the door. A youth of about 16 stood outside. He asked if he could borrow some of my books on suicide. I gave him

Warning Signs for Suicide

- Abrupt changes in personality
- Giving away possessions
- Previous suicide attempt
- Ending of a romance
- Inability to tolerate frustration
- Use of drugs and alcohol
- Depression
- Lack of self-esteem
- Eating disturbances (significant weight changes)
- Change in sleep patterns (insomnia or oversleeping)
- Unwillingness or inability to communicate
- Sexual promiscuity
- Extreme or extended boredom
- Inability to concentrate
- Accident prone (carelessness)
- Unusually long grief reaction
- Unusual sadness, discouragement and loneliness
- Hostile or reckless behaviour
- Neglect of personal appearance
- Major loss of a loved one, home, job, health and, for older adults, loss through divorce (trauma and crisis from any major loss should also be considered)
- Running away from home or truancy from school
- Rebelliousness
- Withdrawal from others (especially close friends, family and/or favourite activities) — a warning sign for all age groups

Older Adults

All of the above signs may apply to the elderly, but added to these are:

- Recent loss of a spouse or close friend
- Failure to take prescribed medicine or follow required diets
- Acquires a weapon

For all intergenerational groups, immediate action is needed if the person is threatening or talking about suicide.

some of the best and invited him to join the class where he could sit and read. He stayed until the class ended. Over lunch, he talked about how confused and unhappy he was. He felt he had no reason to live. His parents had separated and there was alcohol abuse, poverty and violence in his home. He was untidy, looked neglected and his marks at school were poor. He skipped classes and was in trouble with all his teachers. An assessment revealed he was using drugs and alcohol on a regular basis. It was determined he was severely depressed and at high risk for suicide.

He agreed to a non-suicide contract that we monitored closely for a number of weeks — both of us fulfilling our

obligations. On weekends, I drove 40 kilometres to his home where I visited him with his grandparents and observed all behaviour. He took extensive therapy for the next two years. After graduating from high school, he went to college where he was checked regularly. He successfully completed college and is now working and doing well. From time to time, he calls and we meet. In our discussions, he maintains the lack of support in his life was the cause of his pain. It was satisfying for me to be able to intervene and to restore some balance in his life.

Many young people are experiencing depression brought about by neglect, troublesome relationships and a host of other factors which are part of our soci-

ety. Depressed adolescents withdraw socially, are bored, appear fatigued and suffer from mood changes. They often express hopelessness and helplessness.

Suicide is frequently linked with mental illness, and biochemical factors in suicide have been identified. Alterations in the chemistry of neurotransmitter chemicals such as serotonin can lead to greater vulnerability, psychiatric problems and suicide. This is true for all age groups of our population. By far, the greatest factors that cause pain are those having to do with the role of the family and the support that an individual needs to avoid feeling alienated.

Ninety-five per cent of suicides among adolescents are preventable. Teens need encouragement to be open about their feelings, to spend time with family and friends, and to consider the importance of spirituality in their lives. They need to be involved in after-school and physical activities along with academic work. Young people need to be taught to encourage and support peers, siblings and younger children. Parents and their teens should set goals together, with realistic expectations that help teens reach their goals. Youth must hear the message that problems are a part of life, but they can be worked through.

A few years ago, suicidologists saw little in the statistics relating to suicide among the aging and the elderly in our

population. Sadly, this has changed. Suicide rates are high in the middle-aged population and reach a peak in the 85-89 male age group. Most are surprised to hear that the aged — particularly men — are vulnerable to suicide.

For most older people, this time in life is one of fulfilment and of satisfaction with accomplishments. For some, however, later life is a time of physical pain, psychological distress and dissatisfaction with present and, perhaps, past aspects of life. They feel hopeless about making changes to improve their lives. Suicide is one possible outcome. The painful causes of elderly suicide — loneliness and social isolation — are treatable. Suicide is rarely, if ever, caused by any single event or reason; it results from many factors working in combination.

Life events associated with suicide among the elderly are: the death of a loved one, particularly a spouse; physical illness or uncontrollable pain; fear of dying a prolonged death that damages family members emotionally and economically; social isolation and loneliness; major changes in social roles such as retirement. White men are most at risk, especially if they are socially isolated or live alone. The widowed, divorced and recently bereaved are also at high risk. Others include those who are depressed or who abuse alcohol and drugs.

Family support of the elderly is cru-

Resources

Suicide Information and Education Centre, 201, 1615 - 10 Avenue SW, Calgary, Alta. T3C 0J7; e-mail: siec@nucleus.com

A comprehensive resource centre and computer database with print and audio-visual materials on suicidal behaviour.

Books

Suicide Teens Talk to Teens by Marion Crook (Self Counsel, 1997, \$12.95).

Living With Grief After Sudden Loss by Kenneth J. Doka (Taylor & Francis, 1996, \$16.95).

Suicide Prevention, Intervention, Postvention by Earl A. Grollman (Beacon, 1988, \$12.95).

cial if they are to feel they are valued members of the family and of society. The elderly who live in retirement homes, nursing homes and various other forms of elder care need to have the love and support of family, community groups and institutions such as the church. Caregivers also need support and training, not only the medical model of training but the whole-person model so they can carry out their important work.

No matter what age, suicide is preventable. Few suicidal persons actually want to die. We can prevent the premature, unnecessary, self-inflicted deaths of youth, middle-age adults and seniors that bring a loss of talent, skills and knowledge, as well as personal loss.

Society needs to be more accountable in curbing the number of intergenerational suicides in our communities by being proactive in the development of prevention and intervention programs. Then, we will be able to help young and old find purpose and meaning in their lives. **R**

Elizabeth Slump, a pioneer in the field of death and dying, is a certified death educator, grief therapist and suicidologist in private practice, specializing in adolescent grief and suicide prevention. She is a member of Knox Church, Ottawa. A former high school educator, she has written curriculum in the field as well as publishing in the areas of funeral process, suicide and grief therapy. She does counselling and presentations as well as training in critical incident stress debriefing.

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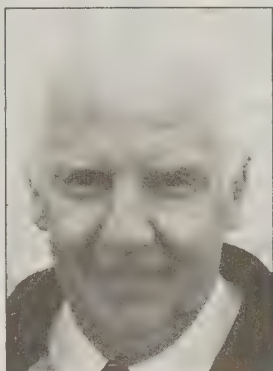
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Faces of Faith



James A. Simpson was born and educated in Glasgow, Scotland, where he qualified as a nuclear physicist before entering the church. During his 21-year ministry at Dornoch Cathedral, he was appointed chaplain to the Queen in Scotland and, in 1994, was elected Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

Though he has written many books about the Christian faith, he is best known for his books of clerical and family humour, including the best-sellers *Holy Wit*, *Laughter Lines* and *All About Christmas* (published by Gordon Wright). Popular novelist Rosamunde Pilcher has written the foreword to his latest book, *The Laugh Shall Be First* (see Reviews), based on the William Barclay Lectures he gave in 1997. All royalties from his humor books go to cystic fibrosis research, a disease from which his oldest granddaughter suffers.

Simpson was the guest speaker at the St. Andrew's Day dinner in Winnipeg in 1996 and at the Burns supper in Edmonton this year.

What is your earliest memory of church life?

As a four-year-old, snuggling into my mother's fur coat during the sermon, and feeling secure

What is your favourite hymn?

Ian Pitt-Watson's wonderful rendering of the 139th Psalm: "Thou Art Before Me, Lord, Thou Art Behind" to the tune *Highland Cathedral*

What musical piece has most inspired you?

"All for Jesus," the final chorus from Stainer's *Crucifixion*

What is your favourite biblical book, and why?

I love Philemon, Paul's only personal letter. What insight it provides into the character of the older Paul.

What book (outside of the Bible) has most influenced you?

Dear Mr. Brown — letters written by Dr. Harry Fosdick to a person perplexed by religion

Where do you find inspiration to sustain your faith?

Reading books by Harry Fosdick, Robert MacAfee Brown, Frederick Buechner and others

Who has played a major role in your faith journey?

Professor William Barclay who taught me New Testament, married me and encouraged me to write my first book

If you could invite anyone (past or present) to a dinner party, whom would you invite?

Golfer Bobby Jones

What is your biggest regret?

Not learning to play a musical instrument

What has been your greatest joy in life?

Being Moderator of the Church of Scotland at the time of many major 50th anniversaries — D-Day, VE-Day, the founding of the United Nations, etc.

What achievement gave you great satisfaction?

Twice captaining the Church of Scotland golf team to victory against the Church of England!

What was your most embarrassing moment in church?

Hearing a minister announce that his Old Testament lesson was from the book of Habakkuk and then being unable to find it

What do you find most irritating about the church?

The words of many of our hymns — they must sound like gobbledegook to people on the fringe of the church

What one change in the church would make it substantially better?

More commitment — certainly not more committees

If you could live a second time, who would you like to be?

The person who finds a cure for cystic fibrosis

Write your own epitaph.

He loved life and laughed often

The Low Cost of Redemption

by Ivor Williams

It is an expression of what I believe," says Jane Roy, 34, of Elmwood Church in London, Ontario. "I know I can make a difference. This is part of my Christian experience."

Making a difference in many parts of the world where slavery, hunger, civil war or other extreme violations of civil rights occur is this young Presbyterian woman's goal. And she pursues her goal with stamina, the incredible vigour of youth and, fortunately, growing support from others. At her own expense, while on brief vacations from her full-time job as assistant director of the London Food Bank, Roy has travelled alone into difficult situations with no guarantee of success. Involving herself in fluid and often dangerous situations, she offers to help in any way — such as burying the dead or distributing food when it is available.

Her new project started simply enough. Glen Pearson, another member of Elmwood Church and executive director of the London Food Bank, spoke to the congregation last year. He held up a

magazine photograph of three Sudanese women recently freed from slavery. After hearing about the thriving practice of slavery in borderlands between southern Sudan and the more resource-rich southern regions of Darfur and Kordofan, Jane Roy and Elmwood's minister, Karen Timbers, carefully researched the needs, resources and dangers. Roy was already planning a trip to Sudan to assist with United Nations food distribution. They agreed she would try to contact the Christian Solidarity International (CSI) team there that had substantiated the reports of slavery in the area. CSI is an internationally recognized, Swiss-based, non-profit, non-denominational organization. Since its inception in 1995, CSI's redemption projects have freed more than 5,000 people from slavery.

Roy was able to locate CSI at their work of slave redemption. She found that slavery was, indeed, increasingly practised. She returned home to develop a

plan for broad Canadian participation in the redemption project. Tens of thousands of slaves are believed held in northern and central Sudan, captured during a bitter civil war that pitted a

Muslim government against southern Christians and others in a more prosperous region.

Glen Pearson says a second stage of the redemption project is to increase public awareness of the slavery problem. "We must build up pres-

sure and support," he says. Part of Jane's focus when she returns to Sudan this May will be to help chronicle incidents of slavery. "We want evidence to support the cause and strengthen lobby efforts," he said.

Presbyterian World Service and Development (PWS&D) has committed funds for the resettlement of former slaves. Karen Timbers sees potential for a major early conference on abolition, involving non-government groups, the Canadian Muslim community and

Buying freedom for slaves in Sudan



Women like these in southern Sudan are in danger of being captured by militia groups and forced into slavery.

Photo by Jane Roy

others, including, she hopes, Lloyd Axworthy, foreign affairs minister.

CSI argues the international community must take a firm stand against the National Islamic Front's policy of genocide that is destroying life, culture, community, religion and ethnic identity. CSI believes member states of the United Nations Security Council must prevail upon the regime in Khartoum to cease hostilities against the people of Sudan. Within only a few weeks of taking its seat on the Security Council, Canada now has the opportunity to take a principled initiative in keeping with the best traditions of Canadian diplomacy.

Spurred by Jane's dedication to the cause and her substantial record of involvement, the Elmwood congregation agreed to oversee the London-based Slave Redemption Project's fund-raising and became the home of the little organization. The congregation pledged \$3,000 to start it toward its objective of \$10,000 to buy freedom for about 130 slaves. (The objective was quickly oversubscribed despite the congregation's already deep involvement in hands-on aid to regions of Guatemala.) The fund, established to assist CSI, was launched in early December 1998. By late winter, it accumulated more than \$50,000. Donations came from across Canada, from Hawaii and from England as local media, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and others recognized the impact the issue of slavery was having on the public. "It appeals to the hearts of people," says Timbers.

A CSI delegation recently reported in a letter to President Clinton that 1,050 black African slaves were redeemed from bondage in mid-January, the largest known number of Sudanese slaves freed at one time. The previous high was last October when 840 were liberated. The latest action raises to 5,066 the total number liberated since 1995 through the



Jane Roy helps distribute food in Sudan in 1998.

program. Many were children, some with their mothers.

CSI representatives, with whom Jane Roy's project is associated, have paid recognized but sympathetic Arab slave retrievers the equivalent of \$54,000 US for the freedom of 1,050 enslaved people. These retrievers work in conjunction with CSI and the leaders of the black African communities affected by the slave raids. These retrievers undertake great personal risk to locate slaves in northern Sudan and return them to their homelands in the south where they are then redeemed. The Sudan government has offered a bounty for the capture of the retrievers.

Interviews with the redeemed slaves reveal a consistent pattern of physical and psychological torture, killings, death threats, female genital mutilation, rapes, forced conversions to Islam, beatings and unpaid labour. The armed forces of the Government of Sudan systematically capture and use Christian and black African slaves (considered animists), especially children, as potent instruments of its declared *jihad* (Islamic Holy War) against the areas that resist its policies of forced assimilation into Arab and Islamic

culture. The Arab traders assisting CSI believe even more intensive military mobilization will be mounted soon. Fear of attacks has already prompted the displacement of large numbers of people from their homes to what they hope will be more secure locations.

Jane reports that torture of the captives is commonplace. Old men and women who are unfit for heavy labour are usually shot or beaten. Younger men and babies are often slaughtered. Children over the age of six and young women are carried back to the north into bondage. Children are forced into militant religious schools and women are forced to work. Some remain with their captors, but others are sold to new owners who often sexually abuse and beat them if they displease their new masters by planning to escape or by resisting indoctrination.

A recent heading on an article in the *London Free Press* about the project said: "Payment to slave traders for the lives of the victims is, for now, a necessary evil." Can two wrongs make a right? the article asked.

There is no evidence to suggest buying slaves from the traders increases the abhorrent practice or inflates the price that is paid for releases. There is some evidence of an actual decrease. But while Roy waits for the world to right itself, she proceeds in her belief that individual lives do matter. Making a difference to a single person is reason enough, she maintains. If putting money into a slave-trader's hands also puts freedom into another person's,

"I decided to escape, and ran with Thiop [infant son] to the forest. I came across a Dinka [tribe] man who took care of me and helped me find the trader [retriever]. He brought me back here. I like being back and hearing my own name again. No one calls me *abid* [slave] or *jongei* [nigger] any more. I am grateful to you and the trade people who helped get me back to my own people. Now I will try to find my children and my father."

— Ajok Mawien Chan, a young mother freed from slavery



Guideposts

Celebrating Our Heritage

Canada's First Presbyterian Church

The first Presbyterian minister in Quebec, Robert MacPherson, was a chaplain with the 78th Fraser Highlanders at the Battle of the Plains of Abraham in 1759. One of the ironies of Canadian history is that Major-General James Wolfe who, in 1745, was busy at Culloden destroying Highland resistance to English rule, commanded Highland (and Roman Catholic) troops in the conquest of Quebec 15 years later. After the fight, many of the soldiers married local women and assimilated into Québécois society. (You can meet people in Quebec today with surnames such as MacLaren, Blackburn or MacNicol who do not speak English.) Others threw their lot in with

Lowland Calvinists and became founding members of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Quebec City which, by 1765, had begun meeting (along with their minister, George Henry) in the former Jesuit college and chapel.

The present structure (pictured above) was built during the ministry of Alexander Spark who died in 1819 while still minister of the congregation. The present sanctuary was opened for worship on St. Andrew's Day in 1810. Today, you can still visit and worship with this congregation in Old Quebec City.



Photo courtesy of Presbyterian Church Archives

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that is a philosophical cost supporters of the redemption program are willing to pay. It is estimated that 40,000 to 150,000 slaves are still held, including many children born into captivity.

"You have kept the price constant and low," Chief Wek Wek Athem told representatives of the Swiss group who consulted with leaders in the area. "We respect you."

The redemption program, now attracting increasing support in Canada and elsewhere, won't end slavery, Roy admits. "But it is one of the steps toward that aim." The only way to end the slavery, Arab retrievers told CSI recently, is to have an elected government that will order an end to the practice. It is the present government, they said, that promotes slavery so that it can get Dinka children and turn them into Muslims and Mujahadeen. Publicity, they assert, is making some people ashamed of having slaves. But international action is vital.

That is the goal of this new form of mission — direct involvement — that Jane Roy and her dedicated colleagues and supporters are spearheading in London. Soon, she will add another area to her list of accomplishments where she has made a difference:

- 1991** assisted with food distribution in refugee camps in Iraq
 - 1992** attended a United Nations earth summit in Brazil dealing with rain forests
 - 1993** travelled to Somalia with an international refugee rescue team
 - 1994** worked in Rwanda with the UN refugee commission's mortality team (burying the thousands of dead that followed famine and civil war)
 - 1996** distributed medical supplies in Yugoslavia and Bosnia
 - 1997** learned Spanish in Guatemala
 - 1998** returned to Guatemala with a group of young Presbyterians to assist in school construction and made her first visit to Sudan
 - 1999** planning another long journey to Sudan in May to continue making a difference.
- Some difference! **R**

Ivor Williams is a writer, a member of Westmount Church, London, Ont., and a contributing editor of this magazine.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Millennium / 125th / Jubilee

Celebrate!



We have talked previously in this column about the Jubilee initiative and how congregations can become involved. Many congregations will want to have worship services using the Jubilee theme. Judee Archer Green, former associate secretary with responsibility for worship, Life and Mission Agency, offers the following suggestions:

Celebrations are often accompanied by song. We sing at birthday parties, anniversaries and festivals. It seems appropriate to mark the Jubilee with song. There are a number of hymns in *The Book of Praise* (1997) that highlight the themes of Jubilee. These can be drawn together for a hymn festival interspersed with Scripture readings, or used in a sermon or study series on Jubilee.

A good beginning would be "Awake, Arise, Oh Sing a New Song" (#819). This easy canon or round could be taught to a children's choir or congregation. Other hymns that speak of celebration are: "Come Sing, O Church, in Joy!" (#757), set to a familiar tune; "New Songs of Celebration Render" (#62), a setting of Psalm 98, also with a familiar tune; and "Come in, Come in, New Year" (#808), set to a tune that appeared in the 1972 edition but may not be as familiar. The text of "Come in, Come in, New Year" is from New Zealand where the New Year comes during the summer. The text of the first line has been edited, with the author's permission, to read "sparkling winter day" from the original "shining summer day."

The theme of justice is central to a celebration of Jubilee. "Christ, You Call Us All to Service" (#585) is a prayer for a commitment to justice. Other hymns calling for justice are: "Blest Are They" (#624), based on the Beatitudes; "O for a World Where Everyone" (#730); "You Walk Along Our Shoreline" (#753) by Canadian author Sylvia Dunstan; "Help

Us Accept Each Other" (#632) and "Worship the Lord" (#555) by Fred Kaan; and "What Does the Lord Require of You" (#709) and "What Does the Lord Require" (#710), two very different settings of Micah 6:6-8. From the global scene, there is "Lord, O Lord Our God" (#713) from Nicaragua; "May the God of Hope" (#726), a Hispanic folk song; and "We Are Marching" / "Siyahamba" (#639), a traditional Xhosa song from South Africa.

Isaiah's prophesy (61:1-2), which Jesus claimed as the mandate for his ministry (Luke 4:18-19), includes the themes of freedom and liberty. These are picked up in "Arise, Your Light Is Come" (#712), "For the Healing of the Nations" (#736), "Jesus, Life of All the World" (#776) by Canadian author Margaret Clarkson, "The Church of Christ, in Every Age" (#486) and "Woman in the Night" (#657). "Wordless, Ancient Earth's Foundations" (#714), authored by our "own" Andrew Donaldson, picks up the stewardship theme.



Walter McLean (left), convener of the Celebrate Committee, spoke at all synods in the fall of '98. He is pictured above in Grande Prairie, Alta., with George Malcolm, moderator of the Synod of Alberta and The Northwest, and Sheila Kirkland, a member of the Celebrate Committee.

tional event October 15-17, 1999, with the theme "Spirits Alive in 125!" The event is planned as a celebration of our denomination's birthday and will include worship, workshops, recreation and general merriment! The Echo Valley Conference Centre in the heart of the Qu'Appelle Valley has been booked.

New Web Site for Canada Youth 2000

This five-day national gathering of Presbyterian young people and youth leaders will be held at Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario, July 4-9, 2000. You can find out all about it by consulting the PC-Pak sent to your congregation or by visiting their new Web site: www.presbycan.ca/cy2000. **R**

Intergenerational Event

The presbyteries of Northern Saskatchewan and Assiniboia are hosting an intergenera-

Resurrection at Dorothy Lake

by Marianne Ashbourne

Our trip began on the Saturday before Easter, April 1998. Snowbanks still lingered in the shade and under trees on this warm Northern Ontario spring day as we set out from Kirkland Lake. It was a 20-minute trip to Dorothy Lake, home of Ontario's most northern Presbyterian camp.

There were four of us. Sandy Wessel, pilot of the 4x4, guided us down the sandy road now churned into ruts by logging trucks. Howard Salmon carried a backpack containing everything necessary to explore the two-hectare site. Eleanor Hurd dispensed past history and wisdom about Dorothy Lake. And I was invited to assess the suitability of the site for the Temiskaming Presbytery Camp Committee's proposal that it become a Christian family campground. For

weeks, I had poured over files from university and Camp Kintail days, searching for information that would assist in the rebirth of a camp.

Dorothy Lake Camp began in the early 1960s under the initiative and direction of Donna and Ken Wilson. For almost 30 years, the summer shores rang with the laughter of children swimming, canoeing, hiking and singing. Late-night excursions explored the success of the beavers in rebuilding the dam dismantled by the beaver dam brigade earlier that day. Canvas tent villages, named Upper, Lower and Ernie's (after a dedicated handyman), accommodated

eager campers and counsellors. The hub of the camp, the Teepee, a structure using exterior cedar posts, housed a roundish dining/rainy day/campfire area.

Since 1991, however, the shores of Dorothy Lake have fallen silent. The cabins are locked and shuttered. The dock is now submerged because the beavers are happily building their dams. Supplies and equipment stored at the Kirkland Lake church are doled out for use at other synod camps.

What happened? The usual combination of things: dwindling camper registrations and difficulty in hiring suitable staff were the main factors. Why not admit defeat and sell the prop-

After almost 30 years as a camp for children, Dorothy Lake re-emerges as a camp for families

The Teepee — the hub of Dorothy Lake Camp.

Inset: (left to right) Keith McMillan, Lee McMillan, Howard Salmon, John Rogers and Bruce Taylor (not in picture) helped prepare Dorothy Lake Camp to be reopened.



erty? The camp committee laboured over these questions but, in the end, came back with the resounding answer: Northern Ontario Presbyterians deserve an accessible camp. Families need spiritual food, so Dorothy Lake will be turned into a camp where families can grow and relax together. It will become a different kind of camp, but the purpose will remain the same: to bring people into relationship with God through the intimate experience of Christian community in the midst of God's creation.

Should there be restructuring? Definitely. Some chainsaws and a carpenter or two for starters. Water systems, campsites, parking spaces, propane generators — these will support a 21st-century use of the camp.

As Eleanor shared stories and decisions that shaped the camp's history, I

Dorothy Lake Family Camp
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was caught up in the contrasts and harmonies of the past and future. Children will once again dive off the dock and run along the paths. But instead of counselors, parents will beckon from the shore. Sparks will drift silently upward from the campfire clearing. But it won't simply seem like family, it will be families, arm-in-arm, singing "Day is Done" to bring an end to another day.

Yes, Dorothy Lake will ring again with laughter and singing. The lake will offer refreshment and, yes, fish (it is stocked with trout). It will offer tranquil passage to families eager to explore on foot or by canoe.

The next time I travel the road to Dorothy Lake, I hope I will find a camp bustling with joy and activity. Next summer, among the tents and trailers, you will find my family. **R**

Marianne Ashbourne is a member of Burns Church in Milverton, Ont.

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Photo: Jacobi Kraemer, CRWPC

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MISSION KNOCKS

Presbyterian Potatoes: An Idea That Grew

Jim Young

My traditional idea of the theology of ministry was challenged last summer. As I hoed potatoes, I found comfort in Martin Luther's words: "Divinity consists in use and practice not in speculation and meditation" and "True theology is practical ... speculative theology belongs with the devil in hell."

The people of St. Mark's Church in Orillia, Ontario, recognized four tasks they needed to work on: a renewed sense of community within the congregation, a raised awareness of the congregation's presence in the Orillia community, a project to reach out into the community, and a way to raise funds.

Jim Marshall, a member of St. Mark's, has land north of Orillia. I asked him about the idea of growing 2,250 kilograms of potatoes to help the food bank feed hungry people. He responded by offering one hectare for a much larger potato-growing project. He would also provide the necessary expertise. At a congregational meeting, the project was enthusiastically approved. We were off to the potato patch!

For the practically inclined, 1,800 kilograms of seed potatoes were sown. That translates into a row of potatoes over nine

kilometres long that had to be tilled, weeded and harvested. Jim, with Murray Caldwell and Bruce Clark, headed up the project. We also grew green onions, beets, carrots, cucumbers and tomatoes. About 40 per cent of the congregation who were physically capable helped. We harvested

more than 600 bushels (some 18,000 kilograms) of potatoes. We sowed 13.5 kilograms of green onion bulbs and harvested about a thousand bunches.

Hands and feet and faces got dirty, backs ached, people became

tired and sweaty in the summer sun. But laughter was heard as laughter can only be heard from people filled with God's freedom. We attended farmers markets each week in Barrie, Bracebridge, Gravenhurst and Orillia throughout the summer until the vegetables were sold.

At the end of the summer, St. Mark's had a renewed sense of mission. Our spirits soared, the earth turned and, at harvest time, we could look back with true thanksgiving for a sense of belonging to each other, for a raised profile in Orillia and for the many hungry folks that would be fed. **R**

Jim Young is the interim minister of St. Mark's Church in Orillia, Ont.



PCC News

This Far by Faith: Celebrating Presbyterian African Heritage

The beat of African drums met worshippers at Knox Presbyterian Church, Toronto, for the wrap-up service of a two-day event celebrating the gifts Presbyterians of African heritage bring to The Presbyterian Church in Canada. The service, held on the afternoon of February 14, was long — almost three hours — but never boring.

Registrants for the event gathered the day before to be welcomed by the words of one of the organizers, Paulette Brown: "We are here because we have answered a call — to discover what it means to be African, Presbyterian and Christian." She called on the church to join in a new process of working together "to reclaim our people, especially our youth. We will not allow our children to choose death as we enter the next century," she declared.

After the opening remarks, a panel tackled a number of questions facing Christians of African heritage in Canadian society. Akua Benjamin, professor of social work at Ryerson University, said that although the church "had done a wonderful job nurturing us when we were buffeted about by racism," it had been less effective in policy development and in changing structures. At one time, there was 47 per cent unemployment among black young people in the Regent Park area of Toronto. Another panelist, Father Munachi Ernest Ezeogu, decried the "blue-eyed, blond Jesus we see everywhere" as "an anachronism and falsification of history." A number of panelists and participants called for a new alliance between the church and the school to deal with some of the problems of racism and violence. Others hoped that studies on black history would be prepared to share with the whole church.

Right: Worshiping to different drummers. Two of the musicians at the African Heritage Service, Toronto.

Bottom: Paulette Brown (left), one of the organizers, with Rev. Eleanor Scarlett, workshop leader.



Scarlett declared, "is to bear a double burden. There is no truth in Jesus Christ independent of the oppressed."

The weekend closed with a joyful worship service led by band, piano, organ and two choirs. The full church listened to the guest preacher, Rev. Joan Martin, a fourth-generation Presbyterian from the United States and the fourth black woman to be ordained in any Presbyterian church. As a guest, she said, she did not want to be rude, but she had noticed "Lift Every Voice and Sing," known as the Black Anthem, had not been included in our new *Book of Praise*. [Any chance we might add an insert to the *Book of Praise*? This is one we should not have missed!]

As the crowd flowed out onto Spadina Avenue, the words of that hymn still rang in their ears:

"Sing a song full of the faith the dark past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope the present has brought us.
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on, till victory is won."

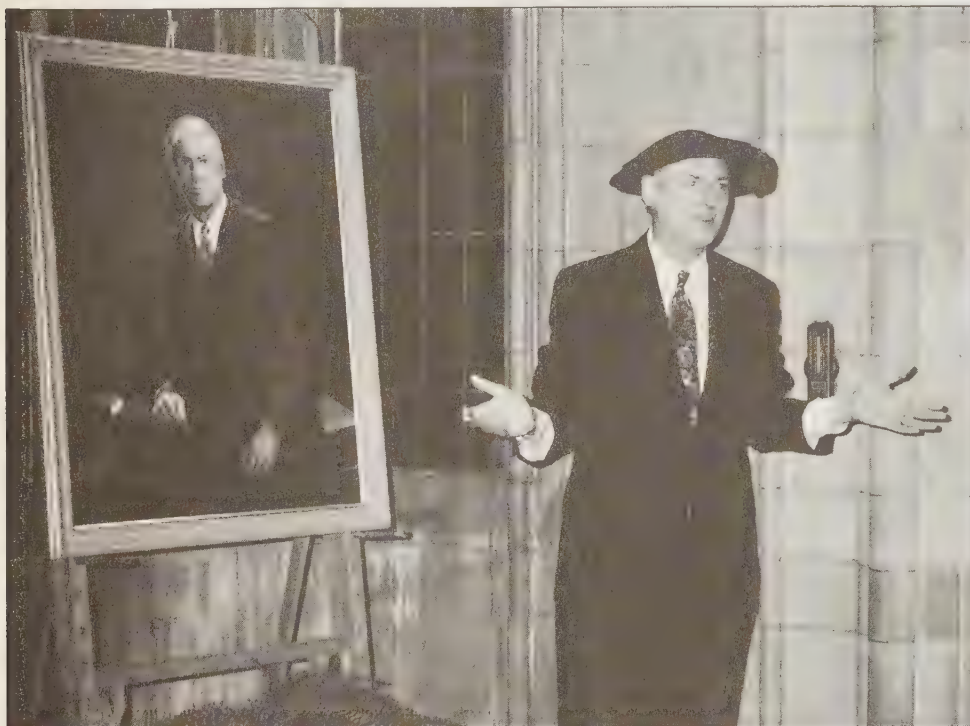
Portrait honours Art Van Seters

The presentation and unveiling of a portrait of Art Van Seters was held February 3 in the Caven Library of Knox College, Toronto. The painting, by artist Gregory Furmanczyk, was the gift of the Knox-Ewart Graduates Association.

Art Van Seters retires this summer after six years as principal of Knox College. In unveiling the portrait, Brenda Adamson, past-president of the graduates association, called him "a man in control with an agenda for change." During his time as principal, Van Seters did much to

promote mutual trust between the college and the church-at-large, Adamson commented. But, above all, she said, the students, faculty and staff will remember him as someone who was accessible and caring, "who not only talks about faith but models it."

On the lighter side, in accepting the portrait, Charlotte Stuart, convener of the Knox College Board of Governors, pointed out that the artist accomplished what no one else was able to do — he got Art to sit down and be quiet.



But, where's the hat? Dr. Art Van Seters addresses the gathering at the presentation of a portrait in his honour.

Presbyterian chosen Easter Seals' Timmy

Eleven-year-old Stephen Brown of St. Columba Church, Belleville, Ontario, has been chosen as this year's Timmy for the Ontario Easter Seals Campaign. Stephen, who served as the Quinte area Timmy for three years, says he is happy about being chosen to represent the province.

"I'm not quite sure yet what I have to do, but I'm looking forward to maybe going on my first airplane ride," he said. (Source: *Belleville Intelligencer*)



Presbyterian College nominates principal

At its meeting on February 11, 1999, the senate of The Presbyterian College, Montreal, unanimously approved the nomination of Rev. Dr. John A. Vissers, senior minister of Knox Church, Toronto, for the position of principal of the college. The nomination was approved by the Committee on Theological Education at its meeting on February 15, 1999, and will be presented to the 125th General Assembly in June, with the request to confirm the appointment.

Knox College Convocation

The 155th Convocation of Knox College, Toronto, will take place at 8 p.m. on Wednesday, May 12, in Convocation Hall, University of Toronto. The guest speaker will be Rev. Dr. Art Van Seters, outgoing principal of Knox College. The degree of Doctor of Divinity (*honoris causa*) will be conferred upon Joy Kogawa, acclaimed author and community activist, and Rev. Harry Waite, who retired April 1, 1999, as mission superintendent, Synod of Toronto and Kingston.

The Presbyterian College Convocation

The 132nd Convocation of The Presbyterian College, Montreal, will take place at Knox Crescent Kensington and First Church, Montreal, on Thursday, May 13, at 8 p.m. Rev. Dr. Don Neil, recently retired senior minister of Knox Crescent Kensington and First, will be the guest speaker. (The speaker at the Graduates Lecture will be Rev. Dr. Geoffrey Johnston, retiring director of pastoral studies at The Presbyterian College.) The degree of Doctor of Divinity (*honoris causa*) will be conferred upon Rev. Lloyd Fourney, senior minister of First Church, Edmonton.

Synod responds to farm crisis

In response to the current farm crisis, the Rural Ministry Committee of the Synod of Southwestern Ontario sponsored an evening event called "Handling Falling Farm Commodity Prices." The event featured a panel discussion held at Knox Church, Mitchell, Ontario.

John Field, a stress relief counsellor employed by the Perth County Pork Producers and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, noted that the unexpected nature of the collapse in pork prices has added to the stress farmers are experiencing. The farm crisis is not a single event but an ongoing problem that will not end quickly, he pointed out.

Field outlined some tools people can use to handle their stress. First, farmers must not isolate themselves from their family, friends and neighbours. At times

like this, farm communities need to pull together — people need friends. Second, people need to know their limits — physically, emotionally and spiritually. Third, people need a plan, something to do when they feel their stress level rising. It could be as simple as taking a walk or using their sense of humour. Finally, it is necessary to find ways to see beyond the danger to the opportunities that arise from a crisis situation.

Brian Ireland, a ruling elder of Knox Church, Teeswater, Ontario, and director of The Queen's Bush Rural Ministry, spoke of the need to listen patiently for God's insight during challenging times. Ireland, who has worked with rural families in crisis for 11 years, has seen many dramatic changes to farm life. Families who have "faith in the Lord" are able to adjust and change more easily, he said.

While these adjustments have been difficult and stressful, all but two of the families he has worked with now say they are better off because of the changes they made.

Ireland also suggested pork producers should band together to produce and market their own products in order to combat giant food processing companies bent on cornering the pork market.

Gisele Ireland, well-known *Rural Voice* columnist, spoke about the farm crisis from a woman's perspective. Communication is essential, she said. Men tend to assume that telling their families what is happening would be a great worry to them. Farm families need to talk and children need to be included in the discussion. She, too, challenged participants to wait on God for help in weathering the storm.



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"Homeless" choir performs at Toronto church

On June 9, 1998, a gas explosion ripped through the Accueil Bonneau, a Montreal shelter for the homeless, killing three people and injuring 17 others. Last fall, the shelter was reopened. Performing at the opening was La Chorale de l'Accueil Bonneau, a choir composed of (now, formerly) homeless men. Since then, the choir has been giving concerts to raise funds for the shelter.

On February 7, 1999, the Out of the Cold program at St. Andrew's Church, Toronto, presented a concert by the 18-voice La Chorale de l'Accueil Bonneau. Donations from the concert were divided between the choir and the church. In the case of St. Andrew's, the money was used to kick off a fund-raising drive to renovate the kitchen to better support the Out of the Cold program. St. Andrew's has been involved in Out of the Cold for seven years and is one of more than 50 churches and synagogues in Toronto currently participating in the program.

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One good thing about the millennium? — Canada Youth 2000!

The first national youth conference ever undertaken by The Presbyterian Church in Canada, Canada Youth 2000, will take place July 4-9, 2000, at Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario.

The idea for Canada Youth 2000 was first conceived at the Presbyterian Youth Summit, a gathering of youth and youth leaders held at St. Giles Church, Ottawa, in May 1997. Small steps in planning were taken. But it was with the introduction of the FLAMES initiative at the 124th General Assembly and its (F)ocus on children, teens and young adults in the year 2000 that the conference became a reality. The support of the Life and Mission Agency also breathed life into the project.

The theme for Canada Youth 2000, "Living Stones: Chosen, Called, Crafted"

(1 Peter 2:4-10), will be present in all aspects of worship, education, discovery and play. There will be three separate tracks to the conference: the youth track, a chance for 15-19-year-old participants from across the country to connect; the mission track, an opportunity for 18-25-year-olds to experience hands-on ministry; and the youth ministry training track, theoretical and practical training in youth ministry for youth 21 years of age and over.

Early reaction to the conference has been enthusiastic and 1,000 beds have been reserved at the university. The 12-member planning committee is continuing to meet.

More information about Canada Youth 2000 is available toll-free at 1-877-831-1588, or from the conference Web page: www.presbyterian.ca/cy2000.



The Canada Youth 2000 planning team: (back row, left to right) Spencer Edwards, Kayode Brown, Lachlan MacKenzie, Matt Brough and Bob Smith; (middle row) Jo Morris, Jenn Geddes, Yvonne Woensdregt and Audrey Cameron; (front row) Colleen Smith, Cara Gowryluk and Ian Morrison.

From baptism to eldership to ordination

In 1947, when she was six weeks old, Shirley Cochrane was baptized at First Church, Prince Rupert, B.C. In 1967, she was married there to Jim Cochrane. In 1984, she became an elder of the congregation. Fourteen years later, in November 1998, the 51-year-old grandmother of two became the first woman to be ordained in the church.

Now, although the congregation of First Church is losing two elders in Shirley and Jim Cochrane, the congregations of Knox Church, Wanham, and Munroe Church, Blueberry Mountain, Alberta, are gaining a minister in Rev. Shirley Cochrane. (Source: *Daily News*, Prince Rupert, B.C.)



Jim and Shirley Cochrane, both elders at First Church, Prince Rupert, B.C., are pictured with some of the farewell gifts they received from the congregation.

Other News

In Ha Lee first Korean to receive Japanese press award

Dr. In Ha Lee, a former General Secretary of the Korean Christian Church in Japan, former chair of the National Christian Church Council in Japan and recipient of the 1984 E. H. Johnson Award at the 110th General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, has received another important recognition. He was one of three people presented with an award for outstanding community service by Japan's major newspaper *Asahi Shimbun Press*. His contribution to society can be seen in his work toward establishing a Korean-run day care for children and a day-care services program for senior citizens and disabled people. He is the first non-Japanese to receive the award.

Dr. Lee was recently in Canada to attend the United Church Division of World Outreach annual meeting and to

Dr. In Ha Lee shares a lighter moment with Rev. Stephen Kendall (centre), principal clerk, and Rev. Ralph Kendall, general manager of the Presbyterian Church Building Corporation.



speak about the effect of economic globalization on the people of East Asia. On February 4, he visited Presbyterian Church offices in Toronto.

Although now retired, In Ha Lee remains the same man of quiet compassion and conviction who received the E. H.

Johnson Award for "mission on the cutting edge" 15 years ago. He still believes fervently in equal rights for all citizens in Japan and is looking forward with great relief to the final demise of the Japanese fingerprinting law this year.

"The justice of God's jubilee is a force for change. The Gospel is truth that liberates in blessings for those it raises, and in the hope of a new beginning for those it brings low." Those are the words of In Ha Lee 15 years ago when accepting the E. H. Johnson Award — words he still lives by today.

Churches ask energy company not to aid Sudanese government

Eleven churches and religious orders from Canada and the United States have submitted a shareholder proposal to Talisman Energy Inc.

The proposal asks the company's board of directors to assure shareholders it will not materially aid the Sudanese government in its civil war or in its repeated violations of internationally accepted standards of human rights. Talisman Energy Inc. holds a 25 per cent interest in a joint oil and pipeline development in southern Sudan where civil war has claimed more than 1.9 million lives since 1983. The company is also asked to prepare an independently verified report of its compliance with this commitment.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada is one of 10 Canadian shareholders submitting the proposal. The others are: the Anglican Church of Canada; the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada; the Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation of Keewatin; The United

Church of Canada; Fonds Ester Blondin (Sisters of Sainte Anne, Montreal), the Jesuits of Upper Canada; the Missionary Oblates, Grandin Province; the Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary (Longueuil), and the Sisters of Sainte Ann (Victoria). The American shareholder is Christian Brothers Investment Services Inc. of New York, a member of the Interfaith Center for Corporate Responsibility. Together they hold in excess of 100,000 shares.

However, Talisman Energy Inc. is refusing to include the proposal with its management proxy circular. To do so would permit all the company's shareholders to consider and vote on it. Instead, Talisman is citing an archaic provision of the Canada Business Corporations Act which states only registered shareholders may submit a proposal. The problem is, only a small fraction of modern shareholders register shares in their own names.

Affiliation of nine U.S. churches given first approval

Capping nearly 40 years of dialogue, nine mainstream U.S. denominations and communions have approved, in principle, a new ecumenical affiliation to be established by 2002. The nine denominations have a combined membership of about 17 million. The new affiliation — to be known as Churches Uniting in Christ — would not bring about a formal merger, but would affirm the recognition of shared baptism and, eventually, of each church's ministers.

The nine churches are: the Episcopal Church [Anglican], the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Christian Church [Disciples of Christ], the United Church of Christ, the United Methodist Church,

(Continues)

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NEWS

the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church and the International Council of Community Churches.

"Churches Uniting in Christ is not the same as the 'church of Christ uniting,' but this is a far deeper and connected relationship than what we have had before," said Lewis Lancaster Jr., interim general secretary of the organizing body, the Consultation on Church Union (COCU).

Each of the denominations' governing bodies must now approve the affiliation. However, the agreement faces at least one hurdle: officials of the Episcopal Church have said they cannot forward the

proposal to their church's General Convention until a dispute over the recognition of church leadership is resolved. As a result, the affiliation may have to proceed with the eight other denominations.

During the meeting, representatives of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) objected to an initial commitment to the ministry of bishops in historic succession, saying it did not allow for the Presbyterian denominational structure of lay leaders and clergy. When mention of the bishops was dropped in a later draft, the Episcopalians objected. Despite the disagreement, the president of the Episcopal House of Deputies, Pamela Chinnis, said the Episcopal Church remained committed to COCU's goals. (ENI)

Letter from Kenya: New constitution only hope

by Joseph Ngare

The festive season is long over. We have celebrated another Christmas and New Year. Kenyans are back to the "routine" business of building the nation. Yet, more than any time in their history, Kenyans face a major test: writing a new constitution.

In December 1998, the Kenyan parliament passed the Kenya Review Commission Act; and, one day before Christmas, President Daniel arap Moi added his assent. The passing of this act is the culmination of bloody confrontations (in which security personnel unleashed terror on reform activists), name-calling between political parties, walk-outs from consultative meetings, and the churches' insistence that the way forward is only through constitutional reform. A 25-member commission will now review the constitution, a process expected to take 2½ years.

I believe a constitution worth its name must protect the rights of the people. The late Joseph Kariuki (a fiery member of parliament slain under mysterious circumstances in 1975) once said: "It takes more than a national anthem, however stirring, a national coat of arms, however distinctive, a

national flag, however appropriate, a national flower, however beautiful, to make a nation." The constitution supercedes national anthems, flags and flowers. It is the unifying force of a nation.

It is my hope the road to the constitutional review process on which Kenyans have embarked will be people-centred and not leader-centred. That can only happen if the people are thoroughly involved. To paraphrase Abraham Lincoln, Kenyans need a constitution of the people, by the people and for the people.

May God's spirit of wisdom, dialogue, forgiveness, reconciliation and reconstruction enable the constitution-making process to be just, transparent and for the well-being of Kenyans. God forbid the whims of some powerful individuals yearning to attain, retain and perpetuate power should take control of the exercise and hold the lives of 30 million Kenyans at ransom for many years to come.

Rev. Joseph Ngare is head of the communications department of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa and editor of the denomination's quarterly magazine, *The Jitegemea*.

News Scan

Presbytery goes on-line

Leaping tall timbers in a single bound, the Presbytery of Superior has gone on-line. Using a program designed and installed by Michael Farris, members of the presbytery can now keep up-to-date with presbytery business, exchange information and even vote. However, presbytery members envisioning a creative use of the delete button will be disappointed. The computer program will *not* replace regular presbytery meetings.

Foodgrains Bank headed for highest level in five years

Grain donated to the Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFB) for use in overseas relief and development projects could reach its highest level since 1994 and has already exceeded last year's total by 800 tonnes.

"We have had just a fantastic year," says CFB director of resources Trish Jordan. "Response to the needs of the poor and hungry throughout the world has been tremendous and we are grateful so many farmers and rural communities have chosen to support our members by sharing their harvests."

Celine Dion No. 1 for those with sinking feeling

Canadian singer Celine Dion is a No. 1 hit at British funerals. "My Heart Will Go On," her hit record from the movie *Titanic*, is the pop song most often played when dearly beloved Britons go to their final resting place, reports the *Times of London*. The former No. 1 song, Elton John's "Candle in the Wind," falls to No. 2. The top traditional tune is "Abide With Me"

Church cleaner wipes out competition in millennium hymn contest

A church cleaner, Hilary Jolly, has beaten more than 400 competitors to win an international millennium hymn competition organized by St. Paul's (Anglican) Cathedral in London, England. The runner-up was the internationally famous hymnist and author of about 200 hymns, Brian Wren, a minister of the United Reformed Church.

Accepting the award, which included a cash prize of 750 pounds sterling (\$1,215 US), Jolly described her hymn, "Through the Darkness of the Ages," as her answer to "millennium hype" which is "pagan and most unpleasant." (ENI)

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Leviticus 25:9-10*



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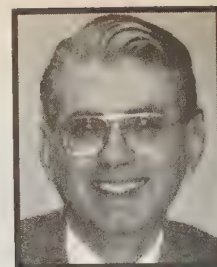
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Resources available from The Book Room:

- Vision Statement
- Sounding the Trumpet (leader's guide)
- Making a New Beginning (theological reflections)
- A Matter of Interest (video: 15 minutes)
- *Proclaim Jubilee* by Marcia Harris

Resources available from Justice Ministries:

- Interactive posters
- Background brochure on Debt Cancellation
- **NEW** Fact sheets on Debt Cancellation
- Jubilee 2000: Time for Debt Remission



Keeping Credit Where Credit Is Due

I read somewhere there is a rule that says all groups raising funds under the Presbyterian Church banner should turn over their funds to the board of managers at year's end. Is that true?

There is no such rule. Although session has oversight of all organizations in the congregation, it cannot normally order where funds raised by such organizations should be directed.

Our congregation has two groups that raise a few thousand dollars each year. They dispense their funds for various purposes — some to assist special projects in the congregation, but never to support the general congregational budget. In the case of a congregational financial crisis, I suppose they might be called upon for help; but they are under no legal obligation to

provide it. After all, they raised these funds on their own, often for mission work or to assist some specialized ministry, and could be breaking faith with the donors if the money were put into the general congregation coffers at year's end.

Sometimes, congregations in financial difficulties are tempted to take monies from the Presbyterians Sharing... account, money which has been donated by the membership for the work of The Presbyterian Church in Canada at home and abroad. Such is a breach of trust.

It is my view the budget approved by the congregation should be met by the membership through regular "tithes and offerings." The moment a self-supporting congregation begins to rely and/or become dependent on funds other than those provided through the offerings of the people (supplemented, sometimes, by rental income), that congregation may be facing

problems that go beyond financial ones.

Sometimes, congregations have been known to keep their financial heads above water by reducing the minister's stipend without reference to the presbytery. That should never happen. When the congregation called its minister, it committed itself to provide the appropriate stipend and that this stipend would have first call on the congregation's budget.

When a congregation finds itself — temporarily, one hopes — faced with financial problems, it is expected everyone will rally 'round and help solve them. No fund-raising group within the congregation, however, should be forced into the position of doing so. **R**

Please send questions for Rev. Tony Plomp to: e-mail TONY_PLOMP@bc.sympatico.ca or 4020 Lancelot Dr., Richmond, B.C. V7C 4S3. Include your name and address for information.

Easter Gift

Once pink and organdy, now silver and refined —
barely visible against the sky —

I watch the pink and organdy girl look for the hidden eggs,
pastel, and clearly visible to my practised eye.

I recall when life was wide green lawns
with easy prizes for the taking;

I recall a pastel heart, resilient and clean,
too smooth and fresh for breaking.

Should she be warned? I wasn't warned. The pain that came
so quick sent cracks a million ways,
cracks that hurt and healed and hardened, surrounded all;
filigreed like iron lace.

My tender heart; did what dying had not done,
gave it lasting beauty, quiet and wise.

Inside the veined and homely shell called Woe
the one nobody wanted —

Was born the Child of Woe, the Gift, the
Easter Prize.

— Laurel Stedman

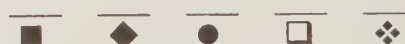
ArithmeCode by Dave Mitchell

Find the value of each symbol by doing the arithmetic. Replace each symbol with the letter which corresponds to its value to find the *ArithmeCode* word below. Category: EASTER EMOTION

- i $(0.875 \times 16) + (121 \div 11) = \square$
- ii $(60\% \text{ of } \square) + (\square - 6 - 7) = \blacksquare$
- iii $(\blacksquare \div 9) \times (\square \div 5) = \bullet$
- iv $(2/3 \text{ of } \bullet) \times (0.1 \times \blacksquare) = \blacklozenge$
- v $5/12 \text{ of } (\blacklozenge - \bullet + \blacklozenge - \bullet) = \blacklozenge$

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z		
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	

The *ArithmeCode* word is:



ArithmeCode answer from last issue: HILLS

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018



The Weight of the World

Crosses abound in our churches — on walls, on pews, on steeples, on banners. The addition of one more cross, draped in purple at the front of the sanctuary for Easter, doesn't always make an impact.

Because the cross is the predominant symbol of Christianity, we sometimes forget what it means. Oh, we know intellectually that Christ was crucified on the cross. But how many of us, when we look at a cross, see first and foremost an instrument of unthinkable torture? What does it mean that Christ died for *my* sins?

In medieval times, the connection between the individual Christian sinner and Christ himself was explicit. In both subtle and overt ways, the faithful were continually reminded why Christ was crucified. The Corpus Christi plays were one such reminder. Held every spring for the festival of the Eucharist, the plays retold the history of the world in terms of salvation. Pageant wagons would wind through the town, stopping at various stations to perform in the street.

We can imagine the effect this would have on the audience. The actors were usually members of merchant guilds who sponsored the wagons, so they would be neighbours and friends of the audience. The shepherds, carpenters, soldiers and ordinary people in the plays would be dressed not like biblical shepherds and carpenters and Roman soldiers but like the 15th-century English people in the audience. And the players could merge with the audience as they moved around the pageant wagon.

The York crucifixion play uses this dynamic to incredible effect. In the play, Jesus only speaks twice; most of the dialogue and action is by the four soldiers nailing him to the cross. The soldiers are ordinary workers who make ignorant fun of Jesus. They complain about their

work, compete with each other and argue over who does the best job, grumble about the person who made the cross (the holes are in the wrong places) and gripe about the weight they have to carry. They are *funny*, and ordinary, and like every other worker in the history of the world.

This makes the action *more* horrifying and compelling. One of the soldiers remarks, "I think these holes were bored wrong."

"You're right," another agrees. "They were marked too short."

Whereupon, the leader says: "Why are you complaining so much? Fasten on a cord and give it a yank until it fits." The horror comes, of course, when the audience realizes they are yanking on Jesus — pulling and stretching his body until it fits the cross.

In the same way, the soldiers complain incessantly about the weight of the cross. They have to rest three times before getting the cross up the hill. One almost drops his end, one whines about his pulled shoulder and another complains about his back. And all four start egging each other on and competing. It almost turns into a game — and most people in the audience join in spirit, for they have seen the macho men of their community competing in a similar way many times.

The clincher comes when one of the soldiers says, "He weighs a wicked weight." The audience, caught up in the soldiers' banter, is suddenly reminded *why* Jesus weighs so much — the metaphorical weight of the sins of the world. The soldiers' back and shoulder pain is nothing compared to the pain they would have suffered if Jesus had not died for them.

Throughout the play, the audience is drawn into the soldiers' laughter and ban-

ter until, suddenly, the cross rises in front of them. Then, they realize what the soldiers have been doing. One scholar writes of the play: "As the cross rises and drops upright into the mortise, the audience realizes that, in their laughter at the awkward efforts of four local workmen, they have been seduced into condoning the Crucifixion."

It's a good reminder. When we see that cross in the front of our churches on Easter morning, we need to remember that each of us is complicit in the Crucifixion. Every little cruelty we perform in our daily lives condones Jesus' suffering and death.

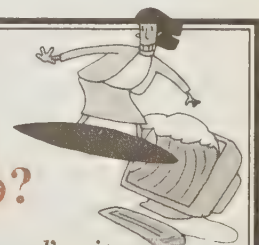
If you are interested in finding out more about medieval Corpus Christi or mystery plays, the Centre for Research in Early English Drama (REED) at the University of Toronto does research and occasional performances: www.chass.utoronto.ca:8080/~reed/reed.html.

*Other resources: **Medieval Drama** by Richardson and Johnston, **York Mystery Plays** edited by Beadle and King, **English Mystery Plays: A Selection**, Penguin Classics. **R***

Kathy Cawsey, a member of Knox Church, Waterloo, Ont., is studying at Oxford University. Write to Kathy at: Middle Common Room, Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, England OX2 6QA; by e-mail at: kathleen.cawsey@lmh.ox.ac.uk.

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PEOPLE & PLACES

THE CONGREGATION OF Knox Crescent Kensington and First Church, Montreal, held a luncheon to honour Rev. Don Neil and his wife, Dorothy, upon his retirement after 22 years as their minister and 46 years in the ministry. ▼

THE SENIOR YOUTH GROUP of Glenview Church, Toronto, recently hosted The Seniors Prom. Young and old joined together for an evening of fellowship, food and fun with a Florida theme. Colson Malloy and

▼ Joan Neilson were crowned king and queen of the prom.



▲ AN OAK PEDESTAL TABLE was dedicated in memory of Hugh (Mickey) McPherson, a longtime elder, church school superintendent and active PYPS participant, at St. Andrew's Church, Thorold, Ont. Left to right are: Emil Barkwell, who crafted and donated the table, Marjorie McPherson and Rev. Douglas Robinson.

THE CONGREGATION ▼ OF First Church, Pictou, N.S., recently dedicated a ramp to make the 150-year-old sanctuary fully accessible. Stacey Munro cut the ribbon, and the congregation entered the church singing "Worship the Lord With Gladness."



A STAINED GLASS WINDOW, unveiled by clerk of session Grace Rutledge, ▼ Angela Allen and Desmond Rampersad, was dedicated to mark the 150th anniversary of Knox Church, Agincourt, Ont., last year. The window, given by the congregation, depicts Jesus as a young man with his carpenter tools. The inscription reads: "I have laid the foundation and another buildeth thereon."



Please note: Photos submitted for People & Places must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope if they are to be returned. Also, please try to ensure all pictures are clear and do not include a multitude of people. Colour or black-and-white photos are acceptable, but negatives and slides cannot be used. Thank you.

PEOPLE & PLACES

A CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION was presented to Ken Moore of Knox Church, Gravenhurst, Ont., for more than 40 years of service to the church, including membership on the board of managers, the finance and maintenance committee, and session (including time as clerk). He is pictured (centre) with Rev. James Sitler and Don Jones.



THE CONGREGATION OF St. Matthew's Church, Saint John, N.B., recently celebrated its 100th anniversary. Mayor Shirley McAlary presents a special award to Rev. L. Dale Gray and clerk of session Delvan O'Brien who accepted the award on behalf of the church.



HONORARY WMS MEMBERSHIPS were presented to sisters-in-law Jean Fryfogel (left) and Christina Fryfogel during a recent worship service at Knox Church, Easthope, Ont. Guest speaker for the occasion was David Smith, director of Evangel Hall, Toronto.

SOFIE MACLEOD, pictured with Rev. David Stewart, was a special guest at Union Church, Mira, N.S. Sofie is the daughter of Rev. Donald MacLeod, a native of the Island of Lewis, Scotland, who was inducted at Union Church on December 21, 1905, and ministered there until August 31, 1922.



The WMS of St. Andrew's Church, Carleton Place, Ont., recently donated \$1,272.88 to Presbyterian World Service and Development for hurricane relief in Central America. The money was raised through a special envelope circulated in the congregation on Mission Sunday, combined with the offering from the Christmas Eve service.



THE CONGREGATION OF St. Andrew's Church, St. Lambert, Que., put together baskets for the Ecumenical Community Services Christmas basket program.



PEOPLE & PLACES

ALTHOUGH IT HAS ONLY six members, with the help of a few adults and some costume changes, the church school of West Shore Church, Victoria, presented a successful Christmas pageant. Wise Men Bruce McCowan, Shane Moore and Andrew McCowan, and angels (L to R) Kimberly Wicks, Patsy Robertson and Christa McCowan, are shown visiting Mary (Brienne Moore) and Joseph (Jesse McCowan).



THE TABLES WERE TURNED for a Yuletide Tea at First Church, Trail, B.C. Pictured, Paul Huszti, chair of the board, and Rev. Gavin Robertson serve tea to (L to R) Trish Exner, Glenn Klit, Jean Davidson, Katie Shaw and Rev. Meridith Robertson.

A WHEEL-CHAIR-ACCESSIBLE ELEVATOR given by Al Roussy and family was dedicated in memory of Eileen Roussy at First Church, New Westminster, B.C. First to ride the elevator with Al Roussy were Kathy Bromley and her daughter, Shannon.



THE CONGREGATION OF St. John's Church, Cornwall, Ont., went through the ceiling when it discovered an immediate repair job was required for a central portion of the church roof. The repairs, which involved removing a large part of the roof that had been weakened by the January 1998 ice storm and installing new trusses, cost \$52,000 and was covered by insurance.



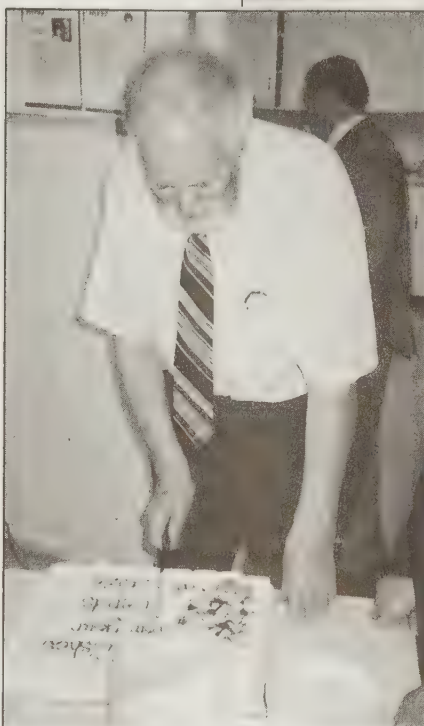
THE LADIES BREAKAWAY GROUP of St. Andrew's Church, Guelph, Ont., presented a cheque to Dr. Jim Thompson, executive director of Canadian Jesuits International, for Opportunity Village in Nepal. The cheque was the result of a year-long fund-raising project that included hot chocolate sales at the Santa Claus Parade, selling "bricks" and a piano concert featuring Clark Bryan.



◀ **SODBUSTERS**
JEAN HILL (L) AND
GINNY WILKINS, charter
members of St. Lawrence
Church, London, Ont.,
(founded 1952) break
ground for an expansion
and upgrading of the
church building.



▲ **REV. DAVID AND LINDA
WEBBER** were recognized
for their 10 years of service with
the Cariboo House Church Min-
istry during the joint house church
Christmas service. Elder Brian
Lawrence presents them with a
certificate for a weekend at a local
resort.



▶ **A FAREWELL LUNCH** was held for
Rev. W. O. (Oliver) Nugent at Calvin
Church, Abbotsford, B.C., Jan. 17. "Ollie,"
who lived in Abbotsford for 38 years,
recently moved to Vancouver to live with
one of his daughters.

A SERVICE OF AMALGAMATION of
Grace Church, Millbrook, with Centre-
ville Church, South Monaghan, Ont.,
was held last October. Rev. Kenneth
MacRae, moderator of the Presbytery
of Lindsay-Peterborough, conducted
the service. Rev. Mary Bowes, a for-
mer minister of the two congregations,
preached the sermon. Leading the re-
cessional are elders Dorothy Challice,
Ray Hylkema, Gerald Armstrong (clerk)
and Robert Graham of Grace Church.
They are carrying the pulpit Bible, the
flagon, chalices and unused bread and
wine from Communion, and the
bowl from the baptismal font.



ARTHUR MCCULLOCH was honoured by the
congregation of French River Church, Pictou County,
N.S., for 50 years of service as an elder — on the
occasion of his 90th birthday. He was presented with
a carved clock and a citation, and his wife, Aileen,
received flowers. They are pictured with Rev. John
Cameron, Cassie Woolley and elder Gordon
Browning (right).



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FROM THE MODERATOR

(Continued from page 4)

"It is not there for nothing," he observes.
"Some day we shall be buried. Some day
a company of men and women will pro-
ceed out to a graveyard and lower a cof-
fin and everyone will go home; but one
will not come back, and that one will be
me. The seal of death will be that they
will bury me as a thing that is superflu-

ous and disturbing in the land of the liv-
ing." That may sound morbid and, yet, it
is the plain truth.

Of all the seasons of the Christian
year, Easter is the one that addresses the
problem of sin and death. It proclaims
that God has reborn us to a living hope
through the resurrection of Jesus Christ
from the dead. God raised his Son and
brought life and immortality to our world.

Lois and I were privileged to partici-
pate in the Presbyterian African Heritage
Service at Knox Church, Toronto, on
Sunday, February 14, 1999. It was a su-
perb service organized by Rev. Paulette
Brown of University Church, Toronto,
and Rev. Tetteh Akunor of the Ghanaian
Church, Toronto. African worship (in-
cluding Presbyterian) is lively and vital,
full of the Spirit and power — especially
the music and singing. The same holds
true for the preaching. Professor Joan
Martin, a minister of the Presbyterian
Church (U.S.A.) and now a teacher at the
Episcopal Theological Seminary in Cam-
bridge, Massachusetts, was the preacher.
She concluded her splendid sermon by
asking the congregation, after she recited
articles of Christian belief, "Do you be-
lieve this?" The congregation responded
with a faint "Yes." She asked again and
again, "Do you believe this?" until she
received a loud and resounding "Yes!"

At Easter, Christians are asked, "Do
you believe this?" In a spirit of "Lord, I
believe, help my unbelief," we answer:
"Christ is risen. He is risen indeed."

Bice Klempa

Moderator's Itinerary

April 11

St. Andrew's, Port Credit, Ontario

April 18

150th Anniversary

St. Andrew's, Tillsonburg, Ontario

April 19

Former Moderators meeting

April 20

Presbytery of Paris, Ontario

April 21

Presbytery of Niagara, Ontario

April 24

Men's breakfast, West Toronto

April 25

125th Anniversary

Knox, Midland, Ontario

April 27

Presbytery of Lindsay-Peterborough,
Ontario

Presbytery of Kingston, Ontario

May 2 (morning)

150th Anniversary

St. Andrew's, Barrie, Ontario

May 2 (evening)

Knox, Sundridge, Ontario

May 3

St. Andrew's, New Liskeard, Ontario

May 4

Presbytery of Algoma and North Bay,
Temiskaming, Ontario

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Reviewed by Laura Alary.

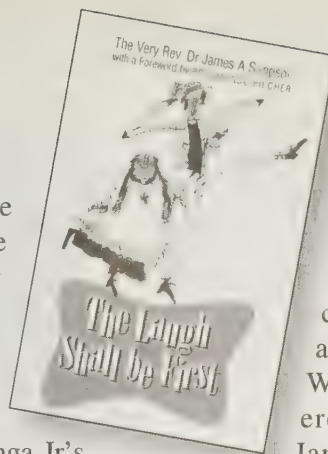
Stackhouse begins by setting out the problems and surveying the responses offered by a variety of other faiths and philosophies, eventually turning his attention to Christianity. In a refreshing departure from some other books on the subject, *Can God Be Trusted?* devotes considerable time to talking about Jesus as the one who, for the Christian, reveals who God is and what God is like. Although our experiences and observations of life may yield only uncertainty and ambiguity, Jesus shows us the face of God who truly is both good and powerful.

who want to consider seriously the question of faith in God before crushing evil befalls them or someone they care about." Less raw and personal than Harold Kushner's *When Bad Things Happen to Good People* and not as anecdotal as Cornelius Plantinga Jr.'s *Not the Way It's Supposed to Be, Can God Be Trusted?* is, nevertheless, clear and honest and does not drift too far into abstraction.

While Stackhouse spends some time discussing suffering in light of Jesus' crucifixion, more reflection on what the cross tells us about the *nature* of God's power would have been welcome. Overall, however, Stackhouse's book is thorough while still being readable. Best of all, it concludes with a direct challenge to the reader: a challenge to trust, to be open to the possibility of meeting and being transformed by God. He challenges the reader to live a life of love for God and for the world God loves *despite evil* — then, wait to see what happens.

The Laugh Shall Be First by James A. Simpson (Saint Andrew Press, 1998). Reviewed by John Congram.

After studying a thousand congregations around the world, German researcher Christian Schwarz concluded there is a



intuitively. Those who have heard him preach in Canada (most recently at First Church in Edmonton) or who have encountered him through a witty saying or a humorous anecdote in the pages of this magazine, will know no one is better qualified to write a book on humour and the church than James Simpson.

Chapters are devoted to humour as the overlooked sense, the value of humour for health, humour as a way of making a serious point, the humour of Jesus, and the church and humour. One important chapter deals with when we ought not to laugh. This chapter reminded me of the words of Stephen Leacock who said that genuine humour must be without harm or malice. Simpson says love makes us sensitive as to when to use humour and when to refrain.

This book will lift your spirits and nurture the God-given ability, as Simpson puts it, "to see the humour in words and everyday happenings, to delight in ambiguity and nonsense, to be amazed and amused by life." While doing that, you will also help a worthy cause. The profits from this book are being donated to research into cystic fibrosis.

45

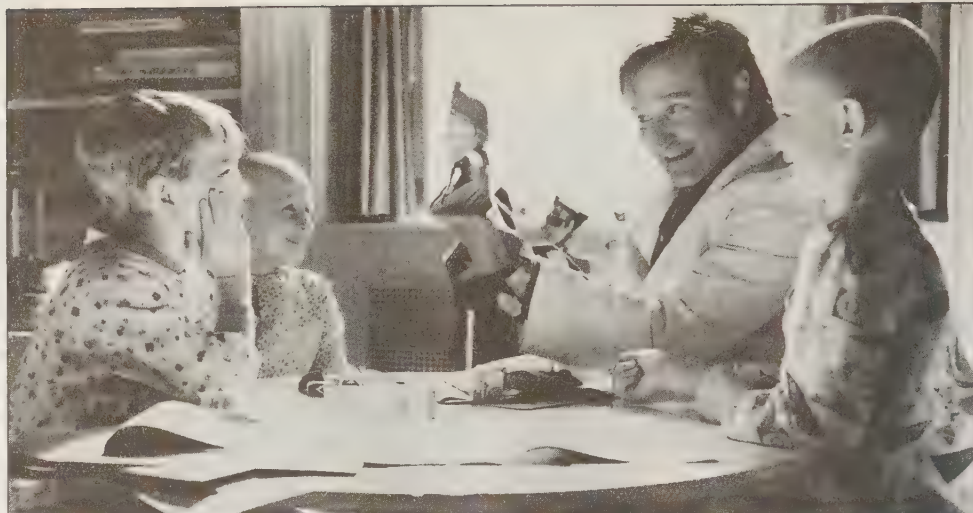
Film

Patch Adams, Universal Pictures, starring Robin Williams and Monica Potter, 1998.

On only two other occasions has a film impacted me this powerfully. *Patch Adams* left me inspired, exhilarated and exhausted. I asked my two young boys what they thought the message of the movie was. "Help other people," one said. "Have fun," said the other. It is this and more.

Patch Adams is a movie that takes place mostly in hospitals and in a medical school. On the surface, it is about doing medicine better. In fact, it is about more universal things: hope, caring and listening deeply to others. It is about finding our joy and helping others to find theirs. "All of life is a coming home," the movie says, "restless hearts trying to find their way home."

Patch had lost the path home. He was lost in the dark woods of life. He found



Robin Williams stars as Hunter (Patch) Adams, a misfit medical student who risks his career by defying the medical establishment that objects to his unorthodox ideas.

the path home in the most unlikely place and spent the rest of his life helping others to find their way. To everyone's delight, Patch had the gift of making the journey fun, really fun!

Medical school is mostly about learning a huge number of facts — about naming and treating diseases and brokenness

of all sorts. The medical institution appears to be a strongly guarded bastion of well-educated, senior, white men, fiercely intent upon maintaining their sacred cow. (Consider seminary — study groups cramming facts for upcoming exams, learning how to do "the church things," dispensing sacraments, preaching sermons, doing the

Photo by Melinda Sue Gordon / © Universal City Studios Productions, Inc.



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administration of the church, fulfilling all sorts of responsibilities to things called congregations, sessions, presbyteries, etc. Need I even comment on those who maintain the sacred cow?)

Patch Adams rediscovers the light, the fire and the joy amid the darkness of a mental institution. The fire burns wild within him, driving him passionately into medical school so that he might, through the activities of that great profession, bring new life to broken souls. With bedpans for shoes, enema bulbs for noses, and balloon animals on safari, he brings joy, life and healing of the most significant kind. An 83-year-old woman gets to have a bath in a pool of noodles. An angry man with pancreatic cancer enjoys a humorous battle of wits with an angel. And children on a cancer ward giggle in delight at plain silliness.

We don't need to find a Patch Adams for our church. Each of us needs to find the Patch Adams within ourselves. In the midst of the brokenness of this world, in the midst of the pain and stress and strain of this world, how many times did you laugh today? When is the last time you laughed so much it hurt? When were you last listened to (really listened to) by another living, breathing human being? When did you last attempt to do "the same old thing" in a totally new way? When is the last time you experienced the kind of joy that set your spirit soaring?

I see it in my little children all the time. Almost always, the joy comes from sheer delight and "reckless" abandon in the simple pleasures of life: big snowfalls, funny faces, tickles and crazy jokes. I think Jesus had something to say about our call to find, enjoy and express that childlike whimsy within ourselves.

I have no doubt Jesus is delighted with *Patch Adams*. He longs for each of us to get in touch with the joy that, amid so much else, is his gift to us.

For information on the real Patch Adams see: <http://dx.gaia.org/communities/gazoonie.html> or <http://www.glob-alideasbank.org/BOV/BV-231.html>.

Shaun Seaman is minister of Trinity Church in Kanata, Ont.

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PROGRAM INFORMATION FOR CRIEFF HILLS COMMUNITY

- **April 4 (6:45 a.m.): Easter Sunrise Service at the Cross.** Brunch in the Dining Hall afterwards (please phone ahead with numbers)
- **May 17-19: Annual Church Secretaries Fellowship.** "Hey, Lord, Can Angels Type?" Topics: Stargazing, Myers/Briggs, and Angels
- **May 21-24: Singles Alive Retreat!** "Where Is God?" Worship, workshops, hiking, biking, "Iron-Man" event, stargazing, campfires
- **June 6: Third Annual Crieff Hills Community Garage Sale**
- **Elderhostel Programs:** This will be our 12th year offering our five-day, live-in, educational training experience for the 55+
 - > **Aug. 8-13:** Celtic Religion and Culture, Art in Turmoil, Nature Walks
 - > **Aug. 22-27:** Birding, History of Canadian Train Life, Canadian-Scottish Immigration
 - > **Sept. 26-Oct. 1:** Autumn Nature Walks, Astronomy, Float Tour of Grand River
- **Sept. 18: September Fair** Workshops and kiosk displays for leaders of children and youth, with an emphasis on intergenerational worship

Oct. 4-8: Ministers Retreat — 4th Annual Renewal Fellowship/CHC sponsored retreat

Oct. 29-31: Women's Fall Retreat — special music, powerful speaker, crafts and free-time

Nov. 6: A one-day Marriage Enrichment Seminar with Dr. Bill and Marilyn McRae.

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Dec. 10-12: Annual Youth Break-Out Retreat

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DEATHS

ARMSTRONG, REV. DR. ROBERT HUGH, BA, MA, BD, DD, 85, died on January 25, 1999, in Hamilton, Ontario.

Born in St. Thomas, Ont., Robert Armstrong's youth was spent in Long Branch, Ont., where he attended school before studying at the University of Toronto and Knox College where he earned all his degrees. Student mission fields and pastorates were spent in Hunter's Point, Que.; Dinsmore, Sask.; Riverside, B.C.; Neepawa, Man.; and at Cookstown, Bracebridge, Gravenhurst, Acton, Hamilton and Wingham, Ont. He became moderator of the following presbyteries: Barrie, Guelph, Hamilton and Grey-Bruce-Maitland.

Dr. Armstrong had a strong feeling about adding community work to his pastorates, taking courses in pastoral education and acting as convener of the church's Institutional Chaplains Committee. He served on hospital and library boards in Bracebridge and Acton, and was president of the Wingham Lions Club.

A quiet, self-effacing pastor and friend, he added helpful advice, quiet humour and much-needed empathy in whatever capacity he acted. He loved the quietness of the outdoors.

Robert Armstrong is survived after 60 years marriage by wife Margaret (Campbell), sons Robert and David and daughter Margaret (Coulter), plus 12 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Following a service in Erskine Church, Hamilton, interment took place in Woodlawn Cemetery.

BALSDON, REV. DR. RONALD HUGH, minister of Knox Church, Sooke, B.C., died January 4, 1999. Ron graduated in mechanical engineering from the University of Detroit in 1954. He earned a Masters of Automotive Engineering in 1957. Responding to a call to the ordained ministry, he entered Knox College and graduated in 1960. He served the congregation at Kitimat, B.C., and then pursued more education through the RCAF. Pursuing his interest in education, he accepted a position in 1970 with CIDA and spent almost a decade in Zambia and Kenya. Returning to Canada, he served at colleges in Ottawa, Lethbridge, Alta., and Moose Jaw, Sask. In

1993, he was called to St. Andrew's, Quebec City. He was active in the congregations and presbyteries wherever he lived. Ron and Maxine began a church in their neighbourhood that became Parkwood Church, Nepean, Ont. He served as convener of the Service Agency. Ron is survived by his wife, Maxine, and their children, Heather, Debbie, Brett and Beth.

ECCLES, JAMES LORNE, 77, devoted elder, clerk of session for 25 years, at Amos, Dromore, Ont.

GAUNTLETT, RALPH LEONARD, 91, at his home in Paget, Bermuda, on Feb. 7. Ralph was a devoted member of St. Andrew's, Hamilton, Bermuda, all his life, a committed ruling elder and trustee for over 45 years, a former clerk of session for 25 years, and church historian until his death. He was passionate about maintaining and nurturing the distinctive features of Bermudian Presbyterianism. Ralph married Mary Irene Harrison in 1927 and they raised nine children. At his death, he had 46 grandchildren and great-grandchildren spread throughout Bermuda, Canada, Sweden and the United States. After Mary died in 1986, Ralph married Mary Morley in 1987. Ralph loved his family, his church and Bermuda. He was a reminder of what it meant to be a Christian gentleman.

LEITH, JOHN GORDON, 90, longtime elder at Amos, Dromore, Ont.

McMATH, ELIZABETH ANN, 87, a longtime faithful member of First Presbyterian Church, Chatham, Ont.

McNEILL, REV. ROBERT, 68, minister, United and Presbyterian Church; minister in association, elder, Dayspring Presbyterian Church, Edmonton, Jan. 25.

MILLIGAN, THOMAS, 93, longtime elder, Trinity Presbyterian Church, Victoria, B.C., died Jan. 19.

MILNE, GRACE, 85, born in Wick, Ont., longtime member, St. John's, Port Perry, Ont., Jan. 5.

PRITCHARD, ELIZABETH A., 88, member of St. Andrew's Presbyterian, Fredericton, N.B., passed away peacefully at home on Jan. 2; daughter of the late Rev. Dr. Frank Baird.

SINE, BARBARA JOYCE HALLMAN, 64, formerly of St. Andrew's, Markham, Knox, Goderich, and St. Andrew's, Kitchener,

Ont.; faithful member, Sunday school teacher and choir member of St. John's, Port Perry, Ont., sadly missed, Feb. 5.

STARK, MARGARET (née SHIRRIFF), first woman elder of St. Andrew's, Huntingdon, Que., Feb. 4; mother of Marian, Allison, Peggy, George and Sandra

ORDINATIONS and INDUCTIONS

Reid, Rev. Lynda R., Knox, Oshawa, Ont., Nov. 8.

Thompson, Rev. Stephen, St. Peter's, Madoc, Ont., Nov. 22.

Young, Rev. Linda Gail, Knox, Guelph, Ont., Jan. 24.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES and INTERIM MODERATORS

Synod of the Atlantic Provinces

Barney's River, N.S., Marshy Hope pastoral charge. Rev. John Cameron, RR 1, Merigomish, N.S. B0K 1G0.

Halifax, Church of St. David. Rev. P.A. McDonald, 4 Pinehill Rd., Dartmouth, N.S. B3A 2E6.

Harvey Station, N.B., Knox and Acton. Rev. Philip Lee, 311 Bay Crescent Dr., Saint John, N.B. E2M 6M1.

Miramichi, N.B., St. James. Rev. Mel Fawcett, 395 Murray Ave., Bathurst, N.B. E2A 1T4.

Moncton, N.B., St. Andrew's. Rev. Andrew Hutchinson, 600 Coverdale Rd., Riverview, N.B. E1B 3K6.

New Glasgow, N.S., Westminster. Rev. Glenn Cooper, Box 1078, Westville, N.S. B0K 2A0.

River John, N.S., St. George's; Toney River, St. David's. Rev. Kenneth MacLeod, Box 185, New Glasgow, N.S. B2H 5E2.

St. John's, Nfld., St. Andrew's. Rev. Ted Thompson, 98 Elizabeth Ave., St. John's, Nfld. A1A 4C4.

St. John's, Nfld., St. David's (effective June 30). Rev. Ian S. Wishart, 5 Chestnut Place, St. John's, Nfld. A1B 2T1.

Summerside, P.E.I., Summerside Church. Rev. Christine Schulze, Box 32, Tyne Valley, P.E.I. C0B 2C0.

Synod of Quebec and Eastern Ontario

Beaconsfield, Que., Briarwood. Rev. Glynis Williams, Action Réfugiés Montréal, 1410 Guy, Montreal, Que. H3H 2L7.

The Transitions column welcomes announcements of special events such as births, marriages, anniversaries, baptisms and the reception of new members, as well as death notices. The rate is 90 cents per word or \$43 per column inch (the lower amount) plus GST.

All notices of pulpit vacancies, recognitions, ordinations and inductions will be charged to presbyteries: \$10 for the basic notice and 90 cents per word for additional information. (There will be no charge to congregations on the Every Home or Club 50 plans.)

Beauharnois, Que., St. Edward's; Valleyfield, Valleyfield Church (part-time). Rev. Kate Jordan, 50 Prince, Huntingdon, Que. J0S 1H0.

Dunvegan, Ont., Kenyon; Kirk Hill, St. Columba. Rev. Edward O'Neill, Box 7, Maxville, Ont. K0C 1T0.

Fort-Coulonge, Que., St. Andrew's; Bristol, Bristol Memorial. Rev. Ruth Syme, Box 1983, Deep River, Ont. K0J 1P0.

Ingleside, Ont., St. Matthew's (part-time). Rev. Ian MacMillan, 18220 S. Branch Rd., Cornwall, Ont. K6H 5R6.

Montreal, Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul. Rev. J.C. McLelland, 121 Alston Rd., Pointe-Claire, Que. H9R 3E2.

Montreal, Knox Crescent Kensington and First. Rev. Richard Topping, 3415 Redpath St., Montreal, Que. H3G 2G2.

Montreal, Korean. Rev. John Kim, 298 Rudar Rd., Mississauga, Ont. L5A 1S3.

Montreal, Maisonneuve-St. Cuthbert's. Rev. Coralie Jackson-Bissonnette, 5545 Snowdon Ave., Montreal, Que. H3X 1Y8.

Ottawa, St. Giles. Rev. MacArthur Shields, 470 Roosevelt Ave., Ottawa, Ont. K2A 1Z6.

Smiths Falls, Ont., Westminster (effective April 30). Rev. Larry Paul, 24 North Street, Perth, Ont. K7H 2S5.

Synod of Toronto and Kingston

Ashburn, Burns. Rev. Andrew Allison, Box 138, Leaskdale, Ont. L0C 1C0; (905) 852-1171; e-mail: leaskdalepres@interhop.net.

Bolton, Caven. Rev. Issa A. Saliba, 9846 Keele St., Box 5097, Maple, Ont. L6A 1R6.

Brampton, St. Andrew's. Rev. Peter Barrow, 38 Edith St., Georgetown, Ont. L7G 3B1.

Burk's Falls, St. Andrew's; Magnetawan, Knox; Sundridge, Knox (1.5 ministers). Rev. Job van Hartingsveldt, Box 650, Burk's Falls, Ont. P0A 1C0.

Cambridge, Knox's Galt. Rev. Kevin Livingston, St. Andrew's Hespeler Church, 73 Queen St. E, Cambridge, Ont. N3C 2A9.

Claude, Claude Church. Rev. Gerald Rennie, 67 Churchill Rd. N, Acton, Ont. L7J 2H9.

Collingwood, First (two ministers). Rev. James Kitson, 539 Hugel Ave., Midland, Ont. L4R 1W1.

Hastings, St. Andrew's; Warkworth, St. Andrew's. Rev. Roger Millar, Box 327, Norwood, Ont. K0L 2V0.

Hillsdale, St. Andrew's; Craighurst, Knox (half-time). Rev. Tim Purvis, Box 26, Stayner, Ont. L0M 1S0.

Kapuskasing, St. John's. Rev. John Blue, Box 283, Timmins, Ont. P4N 7E2.

King City, St. Andrew's. Rev. Daniel D. Scott, 107 Compton Cres., Bradford, Ont. L3Z 2X7.

Kitchener, Calvin. Rev. Angus Sutherland, Central Presbyterian Church, Queen's Square, Cambridge, Ont. N1S 1H4.

Mount Forest, St. Andrew's; Conn, Knox. Rev. Hans W. Zegerius, 125 Mountford Dr., Guelph, Ont. N1E 4G2.

North Bay, Calvin. Rev. Freda & Rev. Gra-

ham MacDonald, Box 650, Burk's Falls, Ont. P0A 1C0.

Oakville, Knox Sixteen. Rev. E.R. Fenton, 375 Christina Dr., Oakville, Ont. L6K 1H5.

Parry Sound, St. Andrew's. Rev. Raye Brown, 1 High St., Huntsville, Ont. P1H 1P2.

Scarborough, Fallingbrook. Rev. Glen & Rev. Joyce Davis, 4156 Sheppard Ave. E, Agincourt, Ont. M1S 1T4.

Scarborough, St. John's, Milliken. Rev. Duncan Jeffrey, 60 Overlord Cres., Scarborough, Ont. M1B 4P3.

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Sudbury, Calvin. Rev. Freda MacDonald, Box 650, Burk's Falls, Ont. P0A 1C0.

Toronto, East Toronto Korean (assistant minister). Rev. Peter Han, 40 Yarmouth Rd., Toronto, Ont. M6G 1W8.

Toronto, Gateway Community. Rev. Robert Syme, 19 Queensbury Ave., Toronto, Ont. M1N 2X8.

Toronto, Leaside. Rev. Art Van Seters, 59 St. George St., Toronto, Ont. M5S 2E6.

Toronto, Victoria-Royce. Rev. Jim Cuthbertson, 250 Dunn Ave., Toronto, Ont. M6K 2R9.

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Blenheim, Blenheim Church (half-time). Rev. Evelyn Carpenter, 60 Fifth St., Chatham, Ont. N7M 4V7.

Burlington, Knox. Rev. David McInnis, 179 Cornwallis Rd., Ancaster, Ont. L9G 4H2.

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Komoka; North Caradoc; Mount Brydges, St. Andrew's. Rev. Dennis Carrothers, 901-700 Wonderland Rd. N, London, Ont. N6H 4V3.

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White Rock, St. John's (full-time assistant minister). Rev. J.W. Mills, 6341 Holly Park Dr., Delta, B.C. V4K 4T2.

*Welcome to
St. Paul's
Toronto
a new member
of the Record's
Every Home Plan*

A Child's Way

A page to share with the children you love

Written by Karen Timbers,
minister of Elmwood Avenue
Church, London, Ont.

Friends for Ever

Scripture: I Samuel, chapters 18-20

Try dramatizing the story

David and Jonathan were the kind of friends who could talk about anything together. "I wish my father were not so jealous of you," Jonathan said to David. "He has it in his head that people love you more than him, and I can't persuade him otherwise."

"Yes, King Saul used to enjoy when I played the harp for him, but even that does not help now," David said sadly. "I knew when he threw his spear at me the other day that he had grown very angry and jealous. While I love living with you and your father, I don't think I can stay with you any longer."

Jonathan sighed. The two friends fell into a long silence. Then, Jonathan said: "I have an idea. I will talk to my father. If I am convinced he is determined to kill you, I will come and warn you."

"It's too dangerous," David replied. "He might get angry with you if he finds out you have helped me."

"Then, we will do it in code," Jonathan said. "I will bring someone out to this field with me tomorrow to practise shooting arrows. Stay out of sight. If you hear me say the words, 'The arrows are farther away,' then you will know my father is still angry."

The next day, Jonathan went to the field. Sadly, he called out, "The arrows are farther away." Tears came to David's eyes for he knew what those words meant. He felt so lonely.

A few days later, Jonathan found a way to meet David secretly. They held one another and cried. "Will I ever see you again?" Jonathan asked.

"I don't know," replied David. But I do know we will be friends for ever and I will always remember how you risked your own safety to help me. I will never forget you. Goodbye, dear friend," David said as he ran off to hide in the hills. He was grateful his friend had saved his life.



Questions to Consider

1. Have you ever had to move away from a friend you love? How did that make you feel?
2. What friends do you have who would help you when you need it?
3. How could you let special friends know how much you love them?

Prayer

Dear God,
Thank you for my friends.
Help me to show them how much I love them. Amen.

A note to adults reading this page:

Learning how to express love is something we can encourage in our children. Make a photo album of special friends, or send a friendship letter to someone or make a gift to share with a friend.

Face-to-Face With a Monster

David Webber

When I was a kid, early spring meant sitting around Pete's pot-bellied stove and listening to my dad and him swap lies about the bush. It was a delightful experience for an eight-year-old boy, except for one thing. As evening turned into night, the stories seemed to take a turn toward scary.

I found my attention stealing from the topic of discussion to the single, bare window of the shack. The window reflected the dim and only source of light, a coal oil lamp, in the most eerie way. I would try not to look at the window, but my eyes were drawn to it like a magnet.

The more I stared at the bare window, the more I was convinced a grizzly bear, the star of one of the previous tall tales, would suddenly loom up in the window and I would be face-to-face with a monster. I shuddered in fear, trying to resist the temptation to run. I shook my head, trying to dislodge the thought. I turned my back on the window, trying to refocus my attention on the latest in the pot-bellied lying match. Nothing worked. Soon, I was faking giant yawns with the hope my dad would take pity on his poor, tired son and take him home to the security of curtains and bright electric lights.

Coming face-to-face with a monster. It never happened to me as a kid. It was merely one of those fears a kid with a souped-up imagination seems to have. But it happens to me now as an adult. Every so often, more often than I would like to admit, I come face-to-face with a monster. And the monster is me. What I mean is, I come face-to-face with myself as a sinner. It scares the hell out of me when it happens.

I try to use all the tricks I learned as a kid for dealing with monsters: things such as running away from my sinful actions, shaking the realization of my sins out of my head, and turning my back



on the reality of my sins to refocus on something else. These remedies for monsters don't work any better now than they did when I was eight. Soon, I can't sleep. My life takes a turn toward the emptiness and fear only guilt can bring. I realize, once again, I have fallen into the slough of despond John Bunyan wrote about in *Pilgrim's Progress*.

I came face-to-face with the monster again the other day. Fortunately, for me, I also came face-to-face with Al from out at Anahim Lake. We ran into one another in the hardware store in town. I don't know whether my hair was standing on end from the last encounter with the monster, or if sin's tell-tale look of guilt was written all over my face, or if the Holy Spirit was leading Al; but, in the few minutes we spoke, he shared something with me that proclaimed the gospel in a way that slew the monster.

Al mentioned how he was recently reading in the book of Romans where Paul says, "... where sin increased, grace abounded all the more" (Romans 5:20). He said he had always read that passage as it applied to the fallen nature of all humanity. However, the other day, he realized it applied to him personally. After our few words together, Al was off to Anahim Lake with his wife, Julie, and

I was off to Lac La Hache with my thoughts.

As I thought about this passage, I remembered another passage in the same book. In Romans 7:21-22, Paul writes: "So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand. For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self, but I see in my members another law at work with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

It seems Paul came face-to-face with the monster in himself as well. It also seems Paul knew what Al found out and shared with me.

It is a disturbing Christian truth. It's not how much of a monster sin has made me or you; it's that the grace of God is always greater. The death Christ died on the cross was for my sin. Christ's death is sufficient for my forgiveness no matter if my sins are of omission or commission, or if they are of word, thought or deed, or if my sin is large or small. Where sin abounds, grace much more abounds in God, through Jesus Christ. And, forgiven, I am called and empowered to put things right with those sinned against.

Have you come face-to-face with any monsters lately — monsters that turned out to be sin in you? These words are faithful and true monster-slayers: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and *cleanse us from all unrighteousness*" (I John 1:8-9). **R**

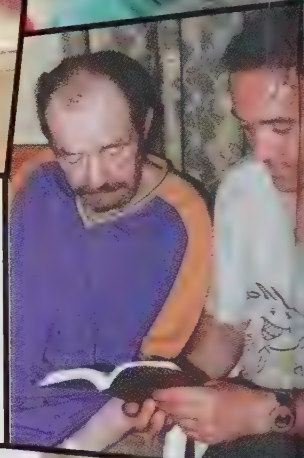
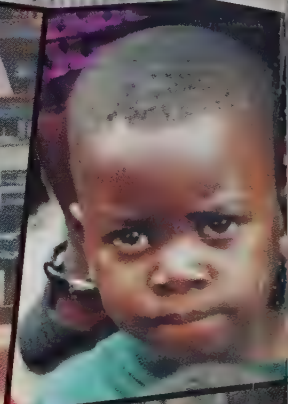
David Webber is a minister of the Cariboo Presbyterian Church, a house church ministry in the Cariboo district of British Columbia.

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into our hearts,
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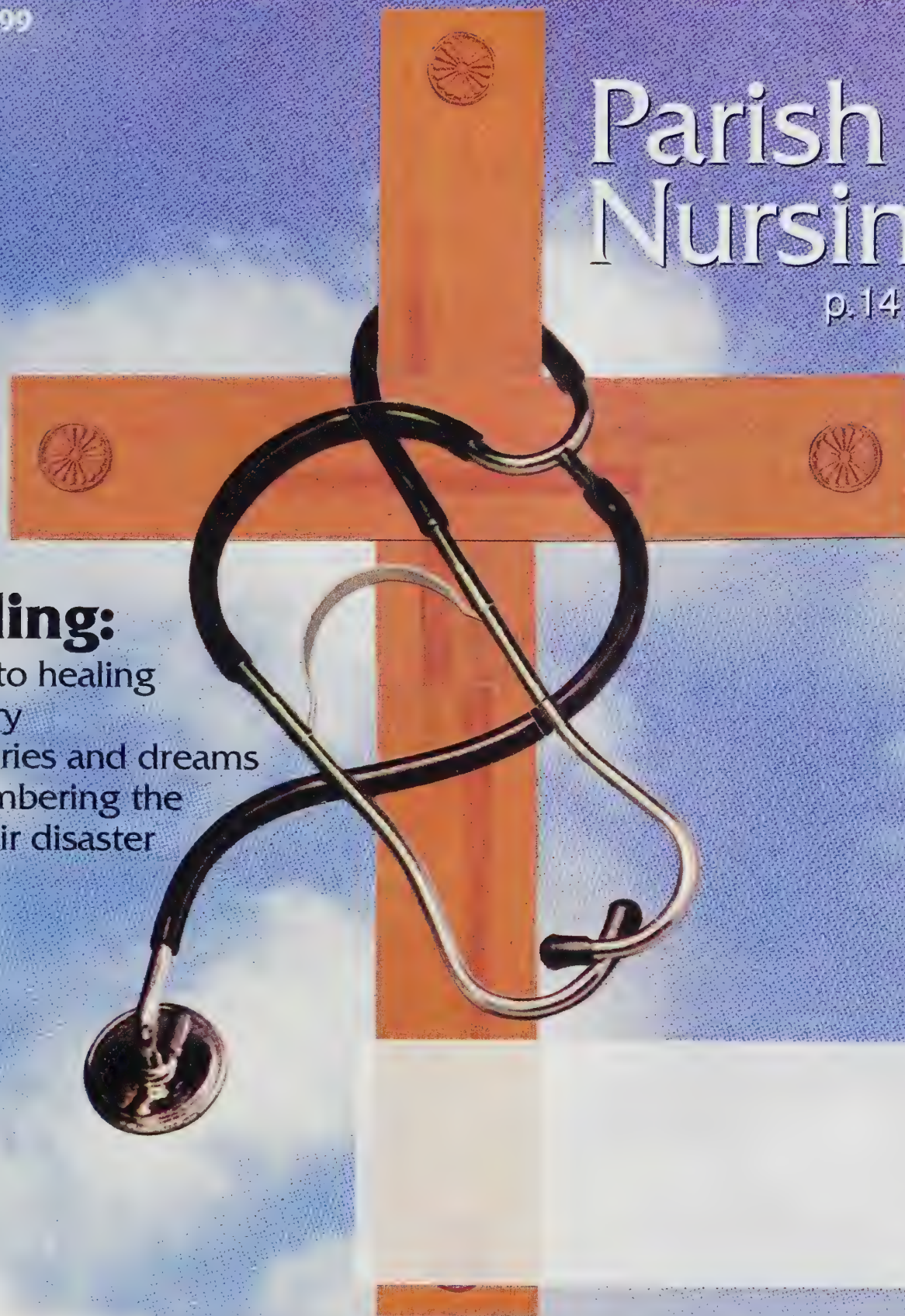
May 1999

Parish Nursing

p.14

Healing:

- A call to healing ministry
- Memories and dreams
- Remembering the Swissair disaster



Pay Now or Pay Later

The National Crime Prevention Council estimates that costs and expenditures associated with crime in Canada are about \$46 billion annually when both system costs and costs of the results of crime are taken into account. This estimate does not include the cost of white-collar crime.

"Is crime prevention through social development a good investment in safety as well as in savings? The answer is, Yes. For example, the Rand Corporation estimates that if we took \$1 million and invested it in prison space for career criminals, this investment would prevent 60 crimes a year. If that same amount were used to monitor 12- and 13-year-old 'delinquents,' it would prevent 72 crimes a year. Further, if that million dollars were invested in incentives for young people to graduate from high school, 258 crimes a year would be prevented."

— from *Our Promise to Children*



A Church for Searchers

The church is for people who believe in God, who try to be followers of Jesus Christ, and who are moved by the Holy Spirit. If people don't fit that description, they don't belong in the church no matter how fine and decent they are. It's not that we have anything against them. In fact, we'd love to have them become a part of the church, and, as soon as they come to faith, we'll invite them and hope they'll come ... But wait! If the church is only for believers, how are non-believers to come to faith? Who will teach them? How will they find their way?

— Patricia Van Gelder

If you actually look like your passport photo, you aren't well enough to travel.

— Sir Vivian Fuchs

Coming to Faith

My coming to faith did not start with a leap but rather a series of staggers from what seemed like one safe place to another. Like lily pads, round and green, these places summoned me and then held me while I grew. Each prepared for me the next leaf on which I would land, and in this way I moved across the swamp of doubt and fear. When I look back at some of these early resting places — the boisterous home of Catholics, the soft armchair of the Christian Science mom, adoption by ardent Jews — I can see how flimsy and indirect a path they make. Yet each step brought me closer to the verdant pad of faith on which I somehow stay afloat today.

— Anne Lamott in *Travelling Mercies*

A Good Sermon

"I happened soon after to attend one of his [George Whitefield's] sermons, in the course of which I perceived he intended to finish with a collection, and I silently resolved he should get nothing from me. I had in my pocket a handful of copper money, three or four silver dollars, and five pistoles in gold. As he proceeded, I began to soften, and concluded to give the coppers. Another stroke of his oratory made me ashamed of that, and determined me to give the silver; and he finished so admirable that I emptied my pocket wholly into the collector's dish, gold and all."

— Benjamin Franklin

"At best, all you could amount to would be a poor Baptist preacher somewhere out in the sticks."

— Bob Jones to Billy Graham while he was a student at Bob Jones University

The Swissair Aftermath

Let me mention first an issue that has troubled many Christians across our country: the perception that representatives of Roman Catholic and United churches were denied the right to refer to Jesus Christ and to read from the New Testament at the multifaith memorial service for the victims of the Swissair catastrophe off Nova Scotia.

Having discussed the matter since with senior protocol officials in the Department of Foreign Affairs, I understand there was *no* intention at all to prevent such references in the service. Somehow, however, a different impression was created for two ministers of our faith, and the ministry regrets it profoundly. If Foreign Affairs is involved in another such service in the future, we'll do everything feasible to avoid a recurrence. I apologize for what happened.

— David Kilgour speaking to the Christian Council of the Capital Area, January 29, 1999

The blood pressure of Canadian churchgoers is 5.5 mm lower than non-churchgoers.



The Real Theologian

I guess what I want to convince you of up front is that real theologians don't make God more complicated but less. They clear the ground. They simplify our lives, not clutter them.

— Eugene Peterson
in *The Wisdom of Each Other*



Healing: Ancient Ministry Rediscovered

No subject evokes more interest or controversy. The latest in Toronto comes from the Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship that reports “dental miracles” — people claiming that their old fillings have been turned to gold. I tend to agree with Doug Koop, writing in *Christian Week*, who describes these supposed events as a trivial pursuit. As Ron Kydd wrote in *Healing Through the Centuries*, these claims seem “to trivialize God.” It’s not that I would be against God turning my fillings into gold (I would become rich), but it isn’t near the top of my priorities nor, I suspect, near God’s. In a world with Kosovo, how could it be? If it were, my faith in God would be shaken.

Having said that, what do Presbyterians believe about healing? Events at the Toronto Airport Christian Fellowship provide an opportunity for us to say what we believe. To ignore them or to pooh-pooh them in a hurting world will not be adequate. What food can we offer? In an interesting and providential turn of events, several of the articles in this month’s issue relate to health and healing.

Calvin Brown takes us on a brief journey through what some Presbyterian congregations are doing in the area of healing. He urges the rest to give it more of their attention and resources.

Last September, I attended worship in Melville Church, Brussels, Ontario. A note in the bulletin from the parish nurse caught my attention. In it, she suggested nutritious snacks for children heading back to school. The idea of a parish nurse is one of those things, like the hula-hoop, which, after it has been discovered, makes us ask, “Why didn’t someone think of this years ago?” Jody Edwards introduces us to parish nursing, one of the fastest growing areas of ministry in the North American Church. Several Presbyterian congregations now have parish nurses as either volunteers or paid members of the church staff. Too late for this issue came news of a creative project in Knox Church, Goderich, Ontario, in which a parish nurse is sponsored jointly by the church and the Victorian Order of Nurses.

Cynthia Chenard’s reflection on the Swissair disaster from the perspective of a chaplain tells of another kind of healing — the spiritual and emotional healing that God brings in the midst of terrible trauma and disaster. The *Toronto Star* carried a similar kind of reflection by the chief medical examiner for the province of Nova Scotia, Dr. John Butt. He described how the experience renewed his faith.

In the face of all kinds of miraculous claims, what do Presbyterians say about healing?

Not the least of these articles is Chris Vais’s “Memories and Dreams.” Struck by Lou Gehrig’s disease, Chris, nevertheless, speaks of the spiritual renewal and healing that has come for both him and others.

This is not the final word on healing but, rather, a beginning. Why not use the articles as a basis for study in your session or other small group. Dare I suggest a summer series? Although churches tend to shut down during the summer months on the premise that everyone is away anyway, statistics tell another story. Canadians are actually taking fewer holidays in the June to September period — only 58 per cent in 1998, down from 76 per cent in 1992. The warm, healing days of summer would seem an excellent time to make a start on a subject the church cannot afford to neglect.

John Congram

Volume CXXIII, No. 5

May 1999

ISSN 0032-7573

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Circulation

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Published on the first of each month except
August by The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

The *Presbyterian Record*, national magazine of
The Presbyterian Church in Canada, is responsi-
ble to the General Assembly. It exists to publish
issues relative to Christian faith and a selection of
current and timely news analyses and opinions of
interest or importance to Presbyterians across
Canada.

Member of The Canadian Church Press and
The Associated Church Press.

Publications Mail Registration No. 0264
Postage paid at Mississauga, Ontario.
Return postage guaranteed.
Send label only.

Subscription Rates

Individual: \$15

Every Home Plan (80% families subscribe): \$9

Club 50 Plan (50% families subscribe): \$11

U.S.A. and Foreign: \$20

Single Copies: \$2

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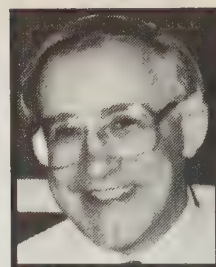
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Klempa



The Church and Theological Education

Two years ago, the Assembly Council report to General Assembly noted that both congregations and graduates have expressed a need for a theological education that is more closely tied to the vision, mission and needs of our church and that is more practical. Accordingly, General Assembly directed the Committee on Theological Education (CTE) to develop a strategy for theological and practical education for ministers and laypeople. CTE has yet to report. Since I have already written about lay education, I thought I would also offer some thoughts on the education of ministers.

The task of preparing ministers is the responsibility of the whole church

Assembly Council, it appears, had a twofold concern. It addressed the perception by many in our church that our theological colleges are not adequately preparing candidates for pastoral ministry and congregational leadership. It also emphasized that theological education should be more church-related and practical.

Equipping Candidates for Congregational Leadership

The task of preparing Ministers of Word and Sacraments is the responsibility of the whole church. It is a long and complex process. The process begins with God's secret call and continues with the examination and approval of the candidate by session and presbytery, then certification and approval by a guidance conference. In each of these steps, the church has an important role. Here, the advice of Sir John A. Macdonald is helpful. Chided for the quality of his federal cabinet, he replied astutely: "Send me better wood and I will build you a better cabinet."

The theological college's responsibility in the process is to provide a solid grounding in basic theological academics, practical disciplines and field education. This is supplemented by summer field experience, overseas mission experience, internships and other ways of obtaining practical experience and testing.

Indicators of Achievement

As in the adage "The proof of the pudding is in the eating," so the proof of the long and complex process is in the production of effective ministers. We are grateful to God when our recent graduates inspire and facilitate congregational vitality and strength. Although it may appear to be presumptuous to map out the work of the Holy Spirit, who is surely the source of vitality and strength in the church, some attempt ought to be made to develop indicators of the church's and college's achievement in producing effective ministers of the gospel. I list seven, without presuming to be exhaustive:

1. A love of and commitment to Christ and his gospel. Without this, all else is

(Continued on page 36)

Moderator's Itinerary

May 8-15

General Assembly
Church of Scotland

May 30

Knox, Burlington, Ontario

June 6 (morning)

First Hungarian, Toronto

June 6 (evening)

General Assembly
St. Andrew's, Kitchener, Ontario

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Illustration by Ed Schnurr

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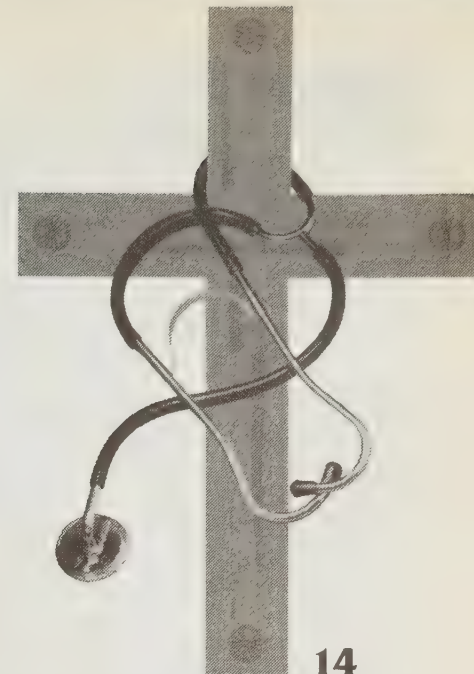
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Where are they now?
The class of '49

Facing the Same Direction

Upon receiving the *Record* today, I was all set to cancel, mainly because we are not and never have been Presbyterians! My husband is a Roman Catholic and I am a member of the Orthodox Church in America.

But — let's not be hasty, I thought. There are some excellent articles and letters and news of missions. Ah, we are all Christians heading to the same place but, perhaps, on a slightly different road.

So, keep it coming, and I will learn from what I read.

*Evelyn Myers,
Qualicum Beach, B.C.*

Happily Recycled

During April, users of the Presbyterian calendar will have looked at two women sitting on a balcony in pale winter sunshine. The picture was taken several years ago in Nanjing, China. The woman is a professor at a seminary. She is well-known to many Christian visitors in China to whom she always gives a warm welcome. This is her story as she told it to me that day.

She and her husband were young, educated Christians who knew many Western missionaries as both teachers and friends. In the 1950s, the missionaries had to leave China. In the years that fol-

lowed, this woman and her husband, with other Christians, came under strong suspicion because of their close association with foreigners. Christian schools were closed and academics were sent to agricultural communes for re-education. There, she found she was slow and awkward at unaccustomed tasks. Because she made frequent mistakes, she was sometimes compelled to make humiliating public confessions of guilt and inadequacy.

In the early 1970s, China became a member of the United Nations and a signatory of UN declarations. At that point, it became necessary to translate these declarations into Chinese. Proficiency in foreign languages ceased being a matter of shame and became a way of contributing to Chinese society. This woman and her husband were taken from the farm and returned to a library to translate UN documents. "Life became a lot easier," she said. A decade later, part of the Nanjing theological seminary was allowed to reopen, and they found fulfilling work and ministry there.

As she told her story, there was no bitterness — only thankfulness that, in her old age, she can use her skills in a

Christian environment and be respected as a scholar by the whole community.

*Marjorie Ross,
Toronto*

Thank God

As someone with opinions generally more orthodox than Kathy Cawsey's, let me say, Thank God for her musings being published among us!

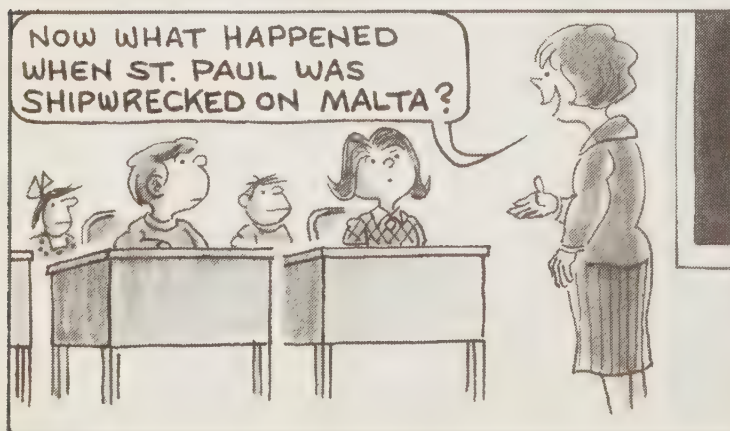
Those who bristle at her questioning of the faith miss the point. The exposure of the twists and turns of her faith journey, particularly as it relates to the world of academia, details for us in living colour precisely what has

been happening to most of our youth for a couple of generations. To the extent the Body of Christ fails to channel the transforming grace of God, so our youth will be seduced by other powers — intellect, science, individual liberty and careers. We've allowed God to seem dull.

It's not that Kathy doesn't believe — WE DON'T! She says (Generation Y, February *Record*): "I bet there are people in our church who, deep down, don't really believe in God but stay because of the fellowship." I welcome her challenge. If we believed significantly in

Shorter letters are more likely to be published and less likely to be edited

WATSON'S WORLD



Noel Watson

LETTERS

God, we would be far more excited, far more transformed and far more fermented with miracles.

Orthodox friends — please stop blaming Kathy Cawsey or the *Record* for our faith issues.

*Jeremy Ashton,
Wyoming, Ont.*

Sad Approval

From the disturbed comfort of retirement, I write in sad approval of Professor Joseph McLelland's article "The End of Presbyterianism" (March *Record*). His analysis of the apparition that haunts us should be posted in large letters on every notice board in our colleges and churches and at 50 Wynford Drive. He has distilled in a few words a penetrating description of our mortal illness.

*Gordon Brett,
Elliot Lake, Ont.*

Joseph McLelland's article presents an accurate diagnosis of our denominational ills. We have caved in to a society which has largely abandoned our beliefs while imposing its upon us. We are more concerned about political correctness than the gospel message of salvation. We are captivated by the amoral culture in which we live. As a result, our people are abandoning their congregations in record numbers. According to the Acts and Proceedings of the General Assembly, we have lost 58,782 members in the past 35 years. More aspirants to the ministry is not the answer since we now have 437 more clergy than we had on the roll 35 years ago. Many seminary graduates are unable to secure a call. As clergy did in the past, we must set our priority once again to present Christ, preaching the gospel so that we become a new people in Christ.

*Evan H. Jones,
London, Ont.*

Taiwan Surprise

Pat Hubbard ("Taiwan Surprise," February *Record*) gives the reader a deep insight into the life and work of George Leslie Mackay in Taiwan. Her joy and zest for life are evident in her writing. So nice to

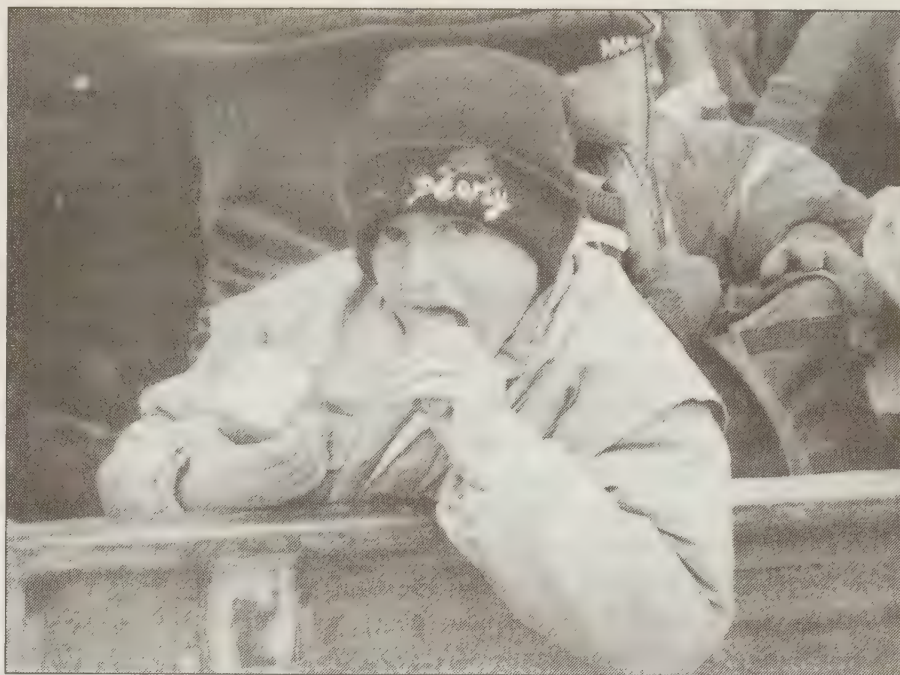


Photo & story: Els Scholte, Action by Churches Together

You are making a difference

APRIL 3, 1999. Caught in "no-man's-land," 20,000 ethnic Albanians wait between the borders of Kosovo and Macedonia. Fifty thousand have gone before them, another 100,000 are said to follow. Cold, wet and hungry, the refugees wait, uncertain where they are going or when they can return home. The ground is one big mud pool. Sitting down, let alone sleeping, is virtually impossible.

Three trucks filled with juice, meat and bread from the Macedonian Council for International Cooperation (MCIC) are stopped at the border. No one will give permission for the large and powerful trucks to enter the area, but it is suggested that tractors — small and unassuming — might be allowed. Amazingly, tractors are found. The food is transferred to their small wooden trailers and quickly distributed. That same evening, MCIC receives permission to begin supplying water and building sanitation facilities.

This story is being repeated again and again as our partners work hard to get aid to the refugees from Kosovo in Macedonia, Albania and Montenegro. PWS&D is a member of Action by Churches Together (ACT), the relief agency of the World Council of Churches. MCIC is one of their partners. It is by working through local agencies such as MCIC — with local contacts and resources — that ACT and PWS&D are able to get aid to places where many others can't. That's what partnership is all about. Working together, we can make a difference.

For more information or to make a donation, write or call:

Presbyterian World Service & Development (PWS&D)

50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, Ontario M3C 1J7

Tel: (416) 441-1111 or toll free 1-800-619-7301

E-mail: pwsd@presbyterian.ca Web site: www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd

Enclosed is my donation of \$ _____ to PWS&D.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Province & Postal Code _____

Please make your cheque payable to PWS&D

read this submission by a local Presbyterian from our little niche of this land.

*Irene Clouston,
Derby Jct., N.B.*

Practical Prodigality

It grieved me to see the article "Practical Prodigality" (*Vox Populi*, March *Record*) which criticizes the words of Jesus. In the Parable of the Prodigal Son, our Master is telling us how much we are loved and how our heavenly Father rejoices over every one of us who repents and turns to him. Can we accuse One who has given his Son to pay for our sins of insensitivity? We are properly in danger of God's wrath to accuse him of it.

*Carol M. Fraser,
Calgary*

Russ Merifield has, like this writer, what he considers to be "a minority viewpoint" on the wonderful example of forgiveness in the Parable of the Prodigal Son. In my 80-plus years, I have heard more sermons on this parable than on any other subject. Perhaps, Christ intended this to be so.

Perhaps, Merifield's piece will encourage preachers to expound more heavily on the virtues of the "good guy" who had a solid belief in the work ethic and on the-less-than-just father who never rewarded the good son for his faithfulness except in retrospect. I wish Jesus had told us what the mother of the two young men thought of the situation, but he certainly made his point about forgiveness.

*James Weir,
Edmonton*

Although we often focus on the good example in Jesus' Parable of the Prodigal Son for how to respond to others with love and forgiveness, this parable is *not* about family or, even, human relationships. Jesus pointedly directed this story — and two more like it in Luke 15 — at some miffed religious types in the crowd. It's about God's great love relationship with sinful humanity.

We are *all* prodigals in God's sight. The ordinary sinners listening to Jesus had no problem identifying with the prodigal. Jesus' striking story warned the

Pharisees and religious teachers (who should have known better) that those who don't rejoice with the father are so convinced of their own goodness they fail to see their need for God's forgiveness. Nor should they resent the generosity of God in freely offering the *same gifts* of eternal life and his presence to *all* who repent.

Christians rejoice that a holy God does not treat any of us the way we deserve. The wonder is the Creator God loves us so much he paid a costly price to forgive us. And Jesus says God even celebrates with all heaven as each person repents and comes home to him. Awesome!

*Margaret Miller,
Toronto*

Well, Dunn?

We appreciated Gary Chiang's letter in the January *Record*. On the one hand, he took the biblical viewpoint seriously that does not condone homosexual practice; on the other, he showed concern for gays. Pastoral care and love for these brothers and sisters are important.

However, we were troubled that Zander Dunn, a senior minister in our denomination whom we respect, wrote a long letter opposing Chiang's view. We found Dunn's arguments fuzzy.

The issue at stake is not where we stand with regard to homosexuality but how we treat Scripture. *Living Faith*, adopted in 1998 with an overwhelming majority, confesses clearly that the Bible "is the standard of all doctrine" (5.1). We expect more from Reformed ministers than dealing with Scripture in such a nonchalant way.

In the March 1999 *Record*, we read with regret that Gordon and Jill Sherret have ended their subscription. With this kind of superficiality, we are sad but not amazed at what they have done.

*George Ormiston and Jim Gordon,
Sault Ste. Marie, Ont.*

To me, the Bible is clear on homosexual practice. Romans 1:18-32 states clearly how Christians have to live. If we live according to God's Word, the debate should be closed.

*Marty Hoogerdyk,
Nanaimo, B.C.*

Leviticus 18:1-29 gives a long list of sexual practices forbidden by the Lord. Included along with bestiality and every kind of incest is homosexuality (verse 22). "Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman; that is detestable."

It is insufficient to say Jesus brought in a new law of love. He also said not a "jot or tittle" (*KJV*), "iota or dot" (*RSV*), "smallest letter or least stroke" (*NIV*) of the Law and the Prophets was to be broken, and that he came not to abolish the law but to fulfil it (Matthew 5:17). What he spoke against was the many thousands of rules and regulations the scribes and Pharisees added to the law, thus obscuring and losing the real message. True, as Dunn said, Christ did not condemn the woman taken in adultery; but, he said, "Go and sin no more."

Dunn's comment that heterosexual males pat each other's bottoms and swim naked together, etc. is not acceptable. A boy observing such immature, silly play might be led astray. It is not pure behaviour. Today, there is much sexual perversion that is often considered normal.

It has been my observation that the teen who becomes a homosexual was first a victim enticed and "loved" by a homosexual, then gradually deceived into believing he also is homosexual by nature. If our preteen boys learned early the security of healthy relationships in school and church, there would be fewer mistakenly diagnosing themselves as homosexuals. They require great love and understanding. I would treat their condition as confidential and avoid embarrassing them in front of others. I would not preach to them and demand a change of life-style. They need hope that they can change and the support of some who have. I would praise their good qualities and small victories and, if relevant, provide grief counselling. In addition, I would include them in coed youth events where there is good creative fun, Bible study, sports, nature walks, ecology and recycling projects, etc. and adequate supervision.

*Myrtle Macdonald,
Chilliwack, B.C.*



Too Ordinary to Notice

We have no tall ponderosa pines growing on our property in British Columbia's Okanagan Valley. I'm sure they grew there once — after all, they grow wild all over the hillsides throughout this whole valley. But someone cleared them long ago to make room for grapes. Or apples. Or something.

In fact, not too many people in this area have ponderosa pines in their yards. In our desire to impose our will on nature, we tend to cut them down to make room for lawns and gardens or for exotic trees that have colourful foliage or berries. So on our lot, we have three

maples, an oak, a catalpa, several Russian olives, a birch, some elms and sumacs, and a mountain ash. But no pines.

Why not, Julie Elliott wondered during a recent congregational retreat. (Julie writes for *The Whole People of God* church school curriculum.) We'd been doing an exercise in which we tried to look at some ordinary, everyday thing, as if we were seeing it for the first time, to see what message God might have for us through the vast diversity of creation.

Julie looked out the window at the unlandscaped hillside. She saw the pines carpeting the slopes with red needles and brown cones. She observed they are native to the area. They grow wild. They require no care, no watering, no spraying, no pruning. And she wondered what our obsession with clearing the pines said about our priorities.

"Isn't this something like motherhood?" she asked.

The rest of us gulped. We didn't catch the connection.

So Julie explained. In recent years,

motherhood has almost become a derogatory term. Women are expected to aspire to something more than raising kids and running a happy home. They're supposed to pursue a professional career. Or serve the community. Make a name for themselves as artists or writers. Run a business ... Mothering, Julie noted, "is so, well, so ordinary."

But all of these other occupations are exotic. They require extraordinary amounts of attention and energy to achieve anything resembling success. It's like trying to grow magnolias in the Yukon — it can be done, and there's an enormous satisfaction if you can do

it. But at what price?

We celebrate Mother's Day each May. Mother's Day is a relative newcomer in our pantheon of festival days. It didn't exist until 1907. It wasn't officially recognized in the United States until 1914; I couldn't find when it gained acceptance in Canada.

As a society, we tend to value things that are vanishing — perhaps, intuitively recognizing that we're losing something valuable. We didn't begin to value the great whales or the plains buffalo until they were almost wiped out. We probably won't honour the ponderosa pine until there are only a scattering of trees left. And it's worth noting that all the trumpeting of "traditional family values" among conservative churches and political parties south of the border didn't start until the traditional family had been almost destroyed by job mobility, urban-

ization and rising divorce rates.

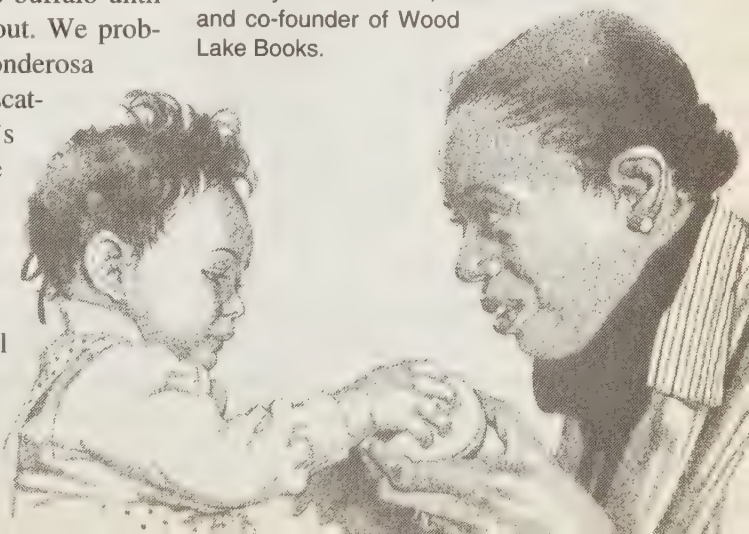
When other social crises hit, governments tend to leap into the breach like bees repairing a hive. They sponsor expensive tax incentives, apprenticeship programs and infrastructure developments — whatever such a creature may be.

But mothering doesn't need job creation schemes. It doesn't need bureaucrats or labour organizers. It's almost impossible to manage. It doesn't need federal funding, or international conferences or any kind of tariff and trade laws. Mothering is so ordinary we have traditionally taken it for granted. Once a year, on Mother's Day, we give mothering a token nod of approval, a pat on the head.

Unfortunately, mothering doesn't add anything to the Gross National Product, the idol of our civilization. Therefore, it doesn't have the same value as, say, drowning a valley behind a massive hydroelectric dam or negotiating international agreements that will make it easier for foreign investors to own more of Canada. Yet, can there be any greater investment than giving the next generation of Canadians a loving start in life?

Mother's Day may be a token celebration — but that's better than ignoring it entirely. **R**

Jim Taylor is a writer, editor and co-founder of Wood Lake Books.





Prosaic World, Poetic God

Genesis 1:1-2:4a

Don't even look at the opening chapter of the Bible, the opening chapter of Genesis, unless you have poetry in your bones. It is not a suitable place for those who see a lie because they look only with and not through their eyes, to paraphrase William Blake. The passage should be read literally — not what literal means now, "with the eyes," but when literal meant literary, "through the eyes."

As an antidote to false literalism, read "God Made Mud" in Kurt Vonnegut's *Cat's Cradle* or "The Creation" in James Weldon Johnson's *God's Trombones*. Such poems, like vivid colours, the music of Mozart, the smile of a child and the generosity of love, are wonderful commentaries on Genesis.

Read Genesis 1:1-2:4a aloud and try to stop from singing the words. The universe is a gift. Chaos is transformed; nothing becomes something. Life sits up and grins from ear to ear. God is the poet of creation, the parent that births the many hues of wonder and delight.

This is not history or science but myth. "Myth" is a slippery and often misused word. Consider "myth" as from the same root as "mouth," referring to a way of speaking a truth. It does not explain or solve mystery but, rather, states it or, in this case, celebrates it. It does so with a passage that is a masterpiece of balance and arrangement that culminates in worship. The passage was probably first written as a kind of libretto for worship in Jerusalem at the second Temple, but it still evokes the worship of grateful hearts.

Creation in this passage is by fiat or word. For those who study the poetry of the passage, there is much that will both provide challenge and give pleasure. For example, there are several ways of translating the first verse, as a glance at the

commentaries or a comparison of translations will illustrate. Ponder the phrase "a wind from God." It can also be translated as "Spirit of God" or as an almighty, awful or awesome wind. Ambiguity and word-play are theology's lifelines that prevent too-easy solutions to what must remain Mystery.

The drama begins with the first "day" and the gift of light. The creation of light before the sun, moon and stars is a clear indication that these are secondary. They are not to be worshipped as astral deities as did the Persians of the sixth century BC. Neither are they to be considered "divine bodies" that rule the affairs of humans as do astrologers of our time.

Day two brought the original Sky Dome. God saw it was as it should be and called it good. On the third day, the first spring arrived with the glory of green grass, dazzling daffodils and tulips, the scent of hyacinths and lilacs, bubbling springs and graceful streams. No need for fertility gods here. God established creation to provide for abundance.

God turned on the sun on the fourth day and it shone brightly until evening arrived with its warm moon-glow and white, sparkling stars. The astral cults are virtually insulted as sun and moon and stars are emptied of all divinity and reduced to the task of establishing the growing seasons and providing a calendar of special days for the worship of God.

The next day, God whistled a tune and birds appeared from sky to sky responding in glorious song. Then fish of every size and shape and colour frolicked in the oceans and rivers. Indeed, it was good!

Then another creation chapter unfolded — a new day with animals that slithered and slid and pranced and danced into being. And God pronounced the day well done.

Another day, call it six, and another word. God called for the planet to be peopled prolifically. That, too, was good, for God delights in his children. Yes, it was very good, "especially delightful" (Lowery).

Shouldn't this creation of humanity be the culmination of creation? Not so. The passage culminates in day seven, a sacred day separated and sanctified for God. Six days of abundance and a day to be in tune with creation. The six days provide abundance and the Sabbath celebrates that abundant life. ■

The myth that speaks the truth about creation

For Discussion and Reflection

- "In our likeness" (1:26). To what does this refer? Physical appearance? Spiritual capacity such as memory, intellect, capacity for love and moral choice? Functions such as bearing responsibility for creation?
- What does it mean to be stewards of creation, "royal people" (1:28)? Exploitation, abuse and devastation? Enhancement, nurture and welfare?
- The lectionary calls for Psalm 8 to be included with Genesis 1. Why Psalm 8 and not Psalm 104?
- Comment on the movement in the passage from chaos to worship.

L. E. (Ted) Siversns is the minister of First Church in New Westminster, B.C.

The Camel's Back

Dear Pastor:

I am writing to you today, Sunday afternoon, simply because I need to get this off my chest. Please don't misunderstand; I intend you no ill feelings. Most Sunday mornings, I leave church feeling uplifted and optimistic — which helps me through the week ahead. Your sermon today, about not dividing our day-to-day lives from our faith, would have been similarly inspiring if you had not committed one glaring sin. Perhaps, you were not aware of it, as so many others seem not to be; but, by praising the merits of a strong work ethic and using terms such as "welfare trap," you marginalized the poor. You separated them from the rest of the congregation and turned them into "those people."

Fifteen years ago, such remarks would not have phased me. I had a good job and my life was going smoothly. I knew no one on social assistance which, in those kinder, gentler times, was referred to as the "safety net." But when my world fell apart in a matter of hours, I became one of "those people." I thought I was somehow different from the typical welfare recipient. My friends and family reinforced the notion by saying, "*You really need help, but most of those people are just using the system.*"

I realized I wasn't different when I attended a three-day study sponsored by the former Ontario government. There, I met 400 other welfare recipients from across the country. I realized they were a lot like me, and came from backgrounds much like my own. They were teachers, computer experts, construction workers, hairdressers — a mix of productive people who had lost their jobs.

Oh, how self-righteous we can be when things are good. I recall a sister in the faith once saying to me: "The Bible tells us that, if we believe in God, we will profit greatly. I believe that is why

my husband and I have so much." I was astounded.

"What about the people in church who are less affluent than you — people singing and praying along with you?" I thought. "Is their faith weaker than yours?"

On another occasion, I was riding to church with three of my closest friends when we saw a group of people walking beside the highway, picking up trash. "Look," one of my friends said. "Are they some of those workfare people? It's probably the first honest day's work they've ever done." This is a woman with a heart of gold who has never had to do a hard day's work in her life because she married well.

What my friends didn't know was that one of their travelling companions was on social assistance. They also didn't know that, because of the current Ontario government's 22 per cent cut in social assistance payments, I was raising two children in a home without any hydro.

There were many other things my friends did not know. They wouldn't know that the majority of the jobs available to people on social assistance are part-time, minimum wage positions. They wouldn't know how humiliating it feels to be grilled with a three-page list of personal questions when someone goes to a food bank. They wouldn't know how vulnerable it feels to know you could be cut off from assistance on the strength of an anonymous phone call — guilty until proven innocent. They wouldn't know how utterly hopeless it feels to search for affordable housing, especially with a provincial government that seems to favour landlords.

I don't know if I've made a point or

merely unloaded a lot of frustration on someone who tries so hard to be understanding. But, you see, pastor, although it may be easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter heaven, there are many ordinary "camels" whose backs are being broken

by an uncaring government and a preoccupied society. There are people like that in our congregation. They are in church on Sunday morning, teaching church school and working in volunteer services. They worry about their children the

same way others do. The only difference between them and the rest of the congregation is the thinness of their wallets. "Those people" are also God's people.

Sincerely yours,

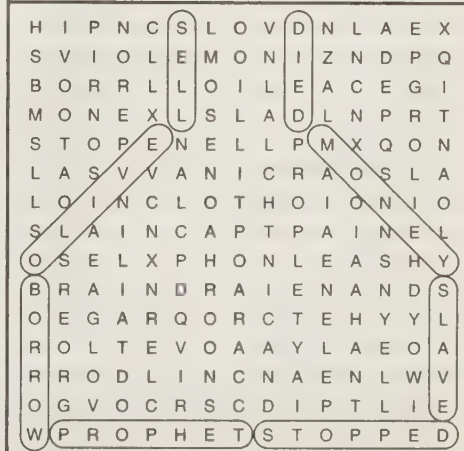
One of "those people" R

The author is a member of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

A plea for compassion for those who must live on social assistance

Child's Way answers (p.50)

- | | | |
|------------|-----------|------------|
| 1. prophet | 4. slave | 7. stopped |
| 2. died | 5. olive | 8. sell |
| 3. money | 6. borrow | |



It's Not the Play, It's the Passion



Jeannette Vermeyden, choir director, with the cast of the Paris Church Easter Pageant.

Two years ago, some elders from Paris Church, Paris, Ontario, were invited to attend an Easter Passion Play at another church. The experience left them gladdened ... and saddened — saddened because they thought their congregation was too old and too small to present a similar production.

It was true, the congregation was small. Nevertheless, new people had joined the church, people with skills and talents that, at the time, remained buried. *They* were not daunted by the logistics involved in an Easter pageant. And, yes, the congregation was old, but it wasn't calcified.

So, that's how the production began. We had no budget, no set and no real commitment from the session or congregation — not very Presbyterian! Things began to change, however, with the first meeting when a broad cross-section of the congregation expressed interest in working on the project. We sent a proposal to the session, asking not for money but for prayer. At least one prayer was answered when the evangelism committee offered the remainder of its

How a small, aging congregation produced an Easter pageant

yearly budget (not spent by February 1998). The adventure was about to begin.

Non-members joined church choir members. Practising every Sunday for 10 weeks required lots of enthusiasm. That enthusiasm came from the choir leaders who continually reminded the singers that, yes, they could do it.

While the choir practised, the actors rehearsed. And the rest of the pieces fell into place as well. A stage was designed and constructed, a tomb and rocks were made from papier-mâché, and a backdrop was built and painted. Costumes were sewn using fabric from a generous donor.

Most of the work may have been going on behind the scenes but, as each week came and went, the production was constantly before the congregation. Sunday

afternoons were no longer available for family gatherings because the 30 main participants in the play were practising at the church.

Because the congregation sometimes doubted its ability to pull "something this big" off, we found ourselves turning to God for guidance and grace. Prayer became a major component of the project — prayer done privately, sometimes with fasting, and prayer in formal meetings.

Yet, although prayer, like faith, may have the power to move mountains, it seldom moves furniture. That's where the goodwill of the session

came in as the sanctuary had to be rearranged to accommodate the play.

With everyone working together — in the end, 65 people from 10 months old to 80-plus — the church was ready for Good Friday. The extensive advertising throughout the town of 9,000 brought 900 people to the performance. On Saturday, another 400 came to experience Jesus' Passion and the meaning of the first Easter. (An added blessing occurred when the free-will offering covered all the project's expenses.)

By relying on God, a small, aging congregation with a few new, younger members became a large outreach organization with skills it never dreamed it possessed. And Paris Church has no intention of stopping there. **R**

A video of the Paris Church Easter Pageant can be obtained for a nominal fee from the church: 164 Grand River Street North, Paris, ON N3L 2M6, Tel. 519-442-2842

Composed from an article by Pat White, chairperson of the evangelism and outreach committee of Paris Church, Paris, Ont.

My dear editor:

Well, J. Paddyngton Bayer has been passed over for Moderator of the General Assembly once again.

Your readers knew nothing of his 12th consecutive run for the lace since he concluded, for the 12th consecutive time, that his chances were bad. "About the same as being elected pope" was how he put it. So he let it be known discretely that his supporters could file their nomination speeches, put away the streamers and take the Welch's Grape Juice off the ice for 1999. One took care of the streamers and the other drank the juice as the three of them met to do some analytical commiserating and spin-doctoring.

The latter task was easy. "Dr. Bayer withdrew to protect the church from potential schism over the relative merits and theological orthodoxy of The Presbyterian College and Knox College. He does, however, plan to overture the next General Assembly to the effect that the principals of our colleges should not be allowed to retire in consecutive years." The analysis of the latest in such a depressing string of rebuffs proved to be more difficult.

Bill Ferguson was J.P.'s man in charge of corraling support from the laity or, more specifically, from the representative elders who could vote. His real Christian name was Bildad — an unfortunate result of his mother's love of the book of Job and the fact he was an only child, "a late blessing" she thought of as "a great comfort." His commiseration was, for the most part, a lament for our times when "... a humble parish minister can't get the time of day from those in the corridors of power."

J.P. was none too happy with Bill's emphasis on "humble" and a little put off by the purple grape juice moustache adorning Bill's upper lip. He was more analytical. What had he done wrong?

Had he not "allowed his name to stand" as a candidate for a forest of prominent pulpits, never with the intention of moving but to let it be known he was much in demand as well as worthy

of another increase in stipend? Had he not served as moderator of synod — *three* times — and put up with weekends in dreary third-rate motels in bucolically boring little towns, presiding over debates on the camp committee report as to how many urinals and life-jackets were really needed? For that matter, had he not, in his second year at St. George-North Park, volunteered to be a camp counsellor to show his "regular guy" qualities? He was sure his chronic dyspepsia dated from that stretch by the lake and he still shuddered in horror every time he caught himself whistling "Give me oil in my lamp, keep me burning ..."

He had made sure he was nominated to Assembly committees too. His name had been in the Blue Book. He had arrived at church offices, beaming and briefcase in hand, to dispense benevolent wisdom and to remind "them" what life was like "in the trenches."

Every year he had harvested the results of every conceivable "photo-op," from pictures of him flipping pancakes on Pancake Tuesday (he thought "Shrove" Tuesday might offend the evangelicals) to the dedication of the reupholstered chairs in the Rebecca Wentworth Room. They all made People and Places in the crucial months of January, February and March. (But, dear editor, he has never forgiven you for turning down his seven-part series "A Servant of the Lord Looks at Leviticus.")

He made it abundantly clear that he stands four-square behind the Westminster Confession of Faith as adopted in 1875 and 1899, the Declaration of Faith concerning Church and Nation of 1954, *Living Faith* and the new *Book of Praise*. He also supports the pension, insurance, medical and dental plans though he has only managed to read the last three.

What more could he do?

Some thoughts he kept to himself and others he grumbled aloud to avail him-

self of the opinion of the second man on his team, The Rev. Aubrey Swinburne. Aubrey was a "son of the congregation" for whom J.P. had called in a few favours to get him in and through his theological education and to secure him a call to a rather drab suburban church. J.P. thought of him as wet and weedy, suspiciously high church and overfond of tales of the martyrs. But, as his secretary had adamantly refused to rewrite his nomination biography or to serve on any more campaigns, Aubrey was a safe and young replacement.

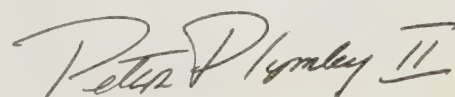
It was his youth that brought a glimmer of hope to J.P. ... or, rather, the fact he was young enough to know about computers and e-mail and stuff like that. (J.P.'s female assistant minister,

the indomitable Millimac, was a whiz at such newfangled gadgetry; but he was scared to ask her and betray his ignorance, thinking she hadn't noticed.)

Aubrey speculated J.P.'s "network," contemporaries of the same vintage talking on the telephone and/or in corners at presbytery tea-breaks, was inadequate for the task. He volunteered to "make time" (J.P., who had a good idea time was not a problem with Aubrey, bridled inwardly but let it pass) to set up and maintain something called a Web site for St. George-North Park and its senior minister, though not necessarily in that order. Millimac had mentioned something similar but, as it lodged in J.P.'s memory as "spider-page," he discouraged her. With this, J.P. was assured, word of his moderatorial worthiness would be accessible to all who had eyes to see and keyboards to punch.


We await developments.

Yours for the overlooked,



Parish Nursing: An Idea Whose Time Has Come

by
*Jody
Edwards*



Susan, a parish nurse, begins her day by visiting parishioners in hospitals and nursing homes. When she arrives at Mrs. Smith's hospital room, she finds her in some distress. "Mrs. Smith, is something wrong? You look upset."

"The doctor was in this morning. They're sending me home tomorrow after only three days in hospital. I'm still in pain!"

"I understand. If you wish, I can talk to your doctor about medication. Is there anything else you are concerned about?"

"Now that you ask, I'm afraid to go back to an empty house. I've been fine up until now. But I'd really like someone there. The nurse didn't mention anything about someone coming over. Who will help me out of bed? Who will change my dressings? Who will help me get dressed? I can't do a lot after this kind of surgery!"

"Mrs. Smith, I'll take care of you. I'll talk to your nurse and ask if home care has been set up for you. If it hasn't, I can do that for you. You won't be alone."

Sadly, this story is all too common these days. We all have heard horror stories of people being discharged from hospitals too early. In some cases, home care has not been put in place or it starts one to three days after the person returns home. People can be left with no

More and more congregations are adding a nurse to their ministry team

Illustration by Ed Schnurr

support, in pain and afraid. Every news broadcast and newspaper carries examples of how people are being affected by the current crisis in health care. Young children die because emergency rooms are too busy. Surgeries are cancelled because of a lack of beds. People of all ages fall through the gaps in our health care system. Does the church have a responsibility to help fill those gaps?

"And Jesus sent them [the disciples] out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal" (Luke 9:2). Churches have done a great job with the preaching part of this mandate, but what about the healing? I am not talking about the television evangelist's approach to healing but the whole-person care (body, mind and spirit) that Jesus modelled. Churches used to fulfil the call to heal, seeing the connection between the physical, emotional and spiritual. At one time, nuns were required to be nurses. Churches built and operated hospitals. More recently, though, the church has forgotten its mandate to preach, teach *and* heal.

Because of its failure to meet the need of its members in offering the healing message of the gospel, the church often becomes the last place people turn. Instead, they turn to New Ageism and questionable forms of alternative therapy

in search of something to fulfil their deepest needs. Now, people have another choice: parish nursing.

Parish nursing seeks to meet the needs of the whole person — to create health and wholeness with God, self and others. Spirit is central to the parish nurse movement. This ministry does not stop with church members but extends to community neighbours as well.

Parish nurses listen to, observe and as-

The benefits are many. Churches reclaim their healing ministry. Parishioners feel cared for, not only physically but emotionally and spiritually as well. Community members see and experience what the church preaches — love and grace. Volunteers discover new meaning and purpose. Many people, touched by the work of a parish nurse, claim they have experienced God's love and care in new and tangible ways.

The church is a living witness to the fact that health is not an individual accomplishment, but a communal responsibility

— Leonard Sweet

sess people's emotional, physical and spiritual symptoms and needs. The parish nurse offers personal health counselling, links people to appropriate community or church resources and programs, and takes responsibility for visiting, whether in a home, hospital or seniors' residence. Parish nurses also offer health education through workshops, bulletin boards and newsletters. Parish nurses train volunteers in church-led health ministry programs.

The history of parish nursing in North America began with a conviction nurses have always felt: life is more than physical. People embody emotional and spiritual components as well. In the 1950s, Granger Westberg, a hospital chaplain and professor of religion and health at the University of Chicago medical and divinity schools, recognized this. He initiated weekly religion-medicine case conferences. They grew rapidly. Through these



Parish nurse assists home-bound senior with medications.

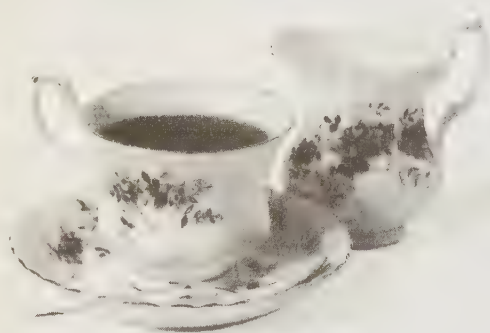
Resources and Educational Opportunities

- Catalogue on whole-health ministry from Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), Presbyterian Distribution Services, 100 Witherspoon St., Louisville, Kentucky 40202-1396, 1-800-524-2612.
- *Congregations Who Care: Ministry of Health and Wholeness* (video, \$7.50 US), Presbyterian Distribution Services (above).
- *The Parish Nurse* by Granger Westberg (Augsburg, \$12.95)
- International Parish Nurse Resource Centre, 205 West Touhy Ave., Suite 104, Park Ridge, Illinois 60068; 1-800-556-5368.
- Inter Church Health Ministries (ICHM), Oshawa, Ontario, Rev. Henry Fisher, 1-905-436-1572.
- University of Alberta, Edmonton: post-graduate, three-week program every May and a corresponding nine-month field education program (optional) — the first parish nurse educational program offered in Canada. Contact: Dr. Joanne Olson (403) 492-6250.
- McMaster Divinity College, Hamilton, Ontario: eight-day, intensive preparation institute every year. Applicant must be a registered nurse. Presbyterians from Calgary; Goderich, Brussels and Hamilton, Ontario; and Rochester, New York, attended this institute in May 1998. Contact: Jody Edwards, (905) 381-0122, or e-mail edwardsj@execulink.com.
- Tyndale College and Seminary (formerly Ontario Theological Seminary), Toronto: five-day course taught by Dr. Lynda Miller, who has completed the first parish nurse theoretical framework in Canada. Contact: Admissions Department, (416) 226-6380, ext. 2105 or toll-free at 1-800-663-6052, ext. 2105.
- Saint Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Nova Scotia: a 12-week, five-module, university distance education parish nurse course taught by Dr. Lynda Miller. Contact: Distance Education Nursing Office at 1-800-588-2246.
- Trinity Western University, Langley, British Columbia: 1999 is the first year for this program. Contact: Dr. Julia Emblen (604) 888-7511.
- Concordia University College, Edmonton: The Lutheran Church offers courses on whole-person health and healing led by Dr. Lynda Miller. Call: (403) 479-9220 for more information.

conferences, a relationship grew between chaplains, doctors and nurses.

Working in preventive medicine years later, Westberg set up dozens of experimental family doctor's offices in church buildings. Nursing, divinity and medical students completed their field education there. He discovered patients treated in this manner were happier and exhibited a greater level of wellness than those treated by a family physician alone. During these pilot projects, Westberg also discovered that nurses were particularly effective because they could use their personal gifts as well as their scientific expertise. With these results, Westberg created the parish nurse model in the United States 12 years ago. Three years ago, the parish nurse concept reached Canada and has quickly spread to all denominations across our country. **R**

Jody Edwards attends St. Andrew's Church in Ancaster, Ont. She is a parish nurse and health ministry consultant. For further information, call (905) 381-0122 or e-mail edwardsj@execulink.com.



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A Call to Healing Ministry

by Calvin Brown

Not long ago, an active, mid-Ontario Presbyterian congregation asked me to speak at an anniversary service on the topic of healing. Following the benediction, the minister invited anyone who wished to have prayer with the ministers and elders to come forward. People came and filled the front pew. The elders came and prayed for them. One after another, people came to share their concerns. Some needed prayer for physical healing, others for relationship concerns, and some for spiritual and emotional needs.

We prayed as the Lord directed us. We saw hope and faith and freedom come not only to the people being prayed for but also to those who prayed aloud or in silence. It was, as someone called it, a "holy moment." One person became a Christian that day and invited the Holy Spirit to take control of her life. The angels in heaven rejoiced, and we rejoiced! Everything was done decently and in order, and the work of God was done that day.

I believe we miss many blessings by drawing back from Jesus' command to engage in healing ministry as an intentional part of our church's witness to the living and compassionate God we serve. In my experience, if this is done sensitively, the elders will be willing, the people will be desirous, and it will reap great rewards in every way for the

health and growth of Christ's church.

The church has always known it should pray for the sick. Yet, many are fearful of anything more than general prayers qualified by "Thy will be done." If nothing happens, we argue, then at least we have not built up false hopes. This pastoral concern is real; yet, increasingly, we are realizing that our timidity is robbing us of health and vitality — not only for those who are sick and come for healing but also for faith-building and faithfulness in the church.

In many Presbyterian churches, there is a serious renewal of the healing ministry. This is not only true in charismatically inclined congregations but also in those we usually describe as evangelical or mainline. Visitors may hardly notice this ministry since we are unlikely to have a neon sign that reads HEALINGS NIGHTLY! But on close examination of the bulletin, they may find, in the small print, an invitation to anyone with prayer concerns to meet with the minister or

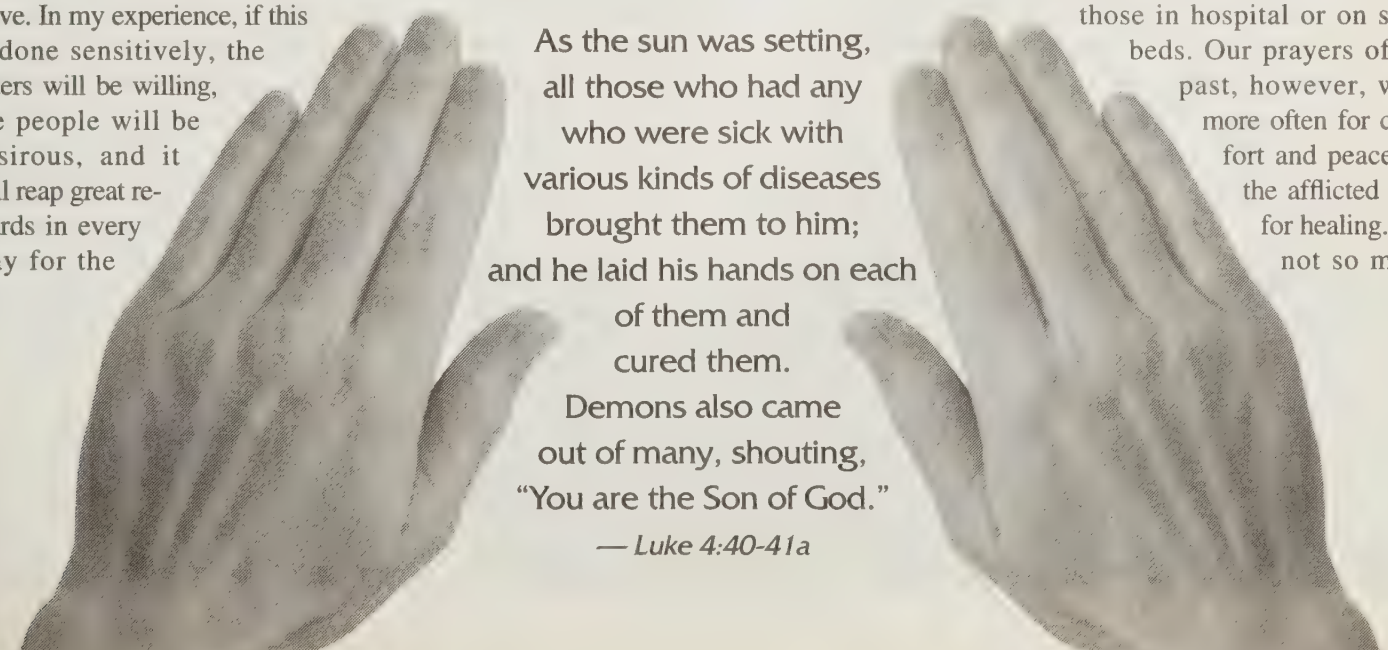
elders at the front following the service. Or, it may announce a monthly mid-week service for healing.

This reluctance to go public is usually based on a fear that we could build up people's hopes falsely and set ourselves up for failure. We need, however, to admit honestly that this is, at times, simply a lack of faith which also shows itself in other areas of ministry in the congregation such as evangelism and stewardship. It is true that not all will be healed in the way we might want; but, if we

come expecting to open ourselves to receive the blessing God wishes to give us, then we will not go away disappointed. One way or another through this ministry, we will encounter God, believe his promises and receive healing.

More and more of our churches are renewing their ministry of healing in refreshing ways. From the gospels, we know one mark of the authentic church is that we should be involved in healing ministry like Jesus. Only an unusually cold church would not pray for those in hospital or on sickbeds. Our prayers of the past, however, were more often for comfort and peace for the afflicted than for healing. It is not so much

Presbyterian churches are renewing their ministry of healing in refreshing ways



As the sun was setting,
all those who had any
who were sick with
various kinds of diseases
brought them to him;
and he laid his hands on each
of them and
cured them.

Demons also came
out of many, shouting,
"You are the Son of God."

— Luke 4:40-41a

With Thanks to God

We acknowledge receipt of gifts from those people who, in their Last Will and Testament, remembered The Presbyterian Church in Canada in 1998. Their gifts totalled \$2,419,986 to continue the church's work in the areas of church extension, pensions for ministers and widows, for overseas work and for its general work.

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that such prayers were wrong — indeed, they are legitimate prayers — but we seemed to lack direction or faith to pray for healing. When we did, it was more out of human compassion than out of response to a word from the Lord. We were often like the disciples who admitted, "Lord, we do not know how to pray."

In the age of science, we put our hope in medical advances and prayed that the Lord would help scientists discover a cure or use medical staff to effect healing. On the mission fields, we set up modern medical hospitals and, as a result, many have been helped and much suffering alleviated. But, today, with the growing scepticism about modern science being the panacea for all our ills, many are turning again to spiritual means of healing.

In the new *Book of Common Worship*, there is a whole section devoted to "Ministry to Persons Who are Sick or Confined." It begins with the affirmation: "The ministry of the church to persons who are sick or confined is rooted in the conviction that God desires wholeness for all." It also comments on three implications for the church's ministry; namely, (1) Jesus employed both word and touch in healing, often in combination, (2) there is often a direct link between forgiveness of sin and physical well-being and (3) there is often a relationship between wholeness and restoration to community, indicating that our ministry to those who are sick and shut-in is a communal responsibility. The book even gives model prayers and an order of service to be used in conjunction with a regular service, a Communion service or a special service for healing.

In workshops and healing services I have led, I have found openness and, even, excitement about the possibilities that a renewal of the healing ministry can bring for the life and faith of the church. But, like all other ministries and worship, it must be done in Spirit and in truth if it is to give pleasure to our God and joy to his people. **R**

Calvin Brown is the executive director of The Renewal Fellowship Within The Presbyterian Church in Canada, and has been involved in healing ministry for many years both as a minister in a Presbyterian congregation for more than 20 years and as a workshop leader.

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Memories and Dreams

by Chris Vais

Readers of the Record will have heard from Chris Vais twice since January 1998. The first article described how Knox Church in Waterdown, Ontario, had ministered to him after he was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), commonly known as Lou Gehrig's disease, in January 1997. A few months later, he wrote a meditation based on a pulmonary examination. Chris's physical health has continued to weaken, forcing him to resign as minister of Knox Church. On March 7, 1999, the congregation held a service of celebration for Chris's ministry. The following message from Chris was read to the congregation by his close friend Andrew Fullerton.

On November 1, 1987, 10 days after my 25th birthday, I became minister of Knox Church, Waterdown. I was a real greenhorn, but eager to learn. Whatever I have learned about ministry has been tested and refined in the context of my pastoral relationship with this congregation over the past 11 years. We have laughed and cried together. We have shared the joys and challenges of worship and work in the name of Jesus Christ. I have never felt like a lone ranger. Ours was always a shared ministry. We believed the purpose of the laity is *not* to help the minister run the church but to *be* the church. The minister exists to help in the process.

I am deeply grateful to have had the opportunity to work with a session thoroughly committed to both leadership and pastoral care. I marvelled at their discipleship and learned from their maturity in Christ. We didn't always agree on things. Over the years, we've had some pretty good fights; but we always seemed to rise above that in seeking unity in Jesus Christ.

The board of managers modelled what it means to be faithful stewards of

God's resources. The members acted responsibly and creatively in managing the financial resources of the congregation; yet, they were not afraid to take risks in following the leading of God's Holy Spirit. The first concern was *never* how much something was going to cost but how it would further the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ in this place.

I remember when we terminated the contract we had with a commercial group renting our hall each week. It provided much-needed income but, at that time, the church hall was the only available space we had other than the sanctuary. We came to this decision to make room for Logos, a weekly youth program on which we placed a higher priority.

I remember when the session agreed to add to our number of worship services and to increase the frequency of our celebration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion. A Christmas Eve service in 1988 grew to three services by 1997. We added a Maundy Thursday Lord's Supper. A quarterly Communion service at 9 o'clock on Sunday morning evolved into the current weekly second service. Wednesday evening worship was added during the

season of Lent, and a pre-dawn pilgrimage to Crieff Hills for the annual Easter sunrise service. Finally, we held three memorable services of "hope and healing," not only by Knox people but also by folks from the wider community as well.

I have fond memories of "Knox Goes North," our annual congregational retreat at Camp Oak-a-lea in the woods of Muskoka. I recall one weekend, in particular, when a few of our group became lost in the bush. When it looked as if it would be a long time before they would be found, one of the strays examined the other hikers and wondered, "Hmmm ... who are we going to eat first?"

A little over a year ago, I travelled to India and Bangladesh with Sleeping Children Around the World, an organization Knox has supported as part of its outreach for the past seven years. The cost of my trip was covered by the service clubs in this town — Rotary, Lions, Optimist, Kinsmen and the Legion, along with some funds from other friends. No one from Knox ever asked the question my sister Michelle asked whenever I went on a trip: "So, is this a holiday? Or is it study leave?" The congregation saw the journey as an extension of their mission and gave me their blessing as they eagerly awaited my return to hear about the experience.

Being part of a vibrant, dynamic congregation over the past 11 years has been immensely invigorating. There has been tremendous growth, not only in numerical growth (membership has doubled, attendance at worship tripled, and the budget increased more than three times) but, of far more significance, growth in

relationships and within individuals. I include myself among them.

This type of spiritual growth cannot be measured in numbers or dollars. Spiritual growth is measured in lives transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit. This growth became more intense and accelerated since January of 1997 when I was diagnosed with ALS. Over the past two years, we have witnessed many signs and wonders that are evidences of God's compassion and grace. And the healing presence of Jesus Christ was made known as never before. I am grateful for the precious memories God has given me in being part of the transformation of people's lives in and through Knox Church.

Whatever we do in the church should be driven by our mission. The vision

have devised ways of making daily life less difficult. A couple of grab bars in the bathroom, a raised toilet seat and the walker you see me using today are a few of the tools we have implemented as I adapt to the changes in my ability. If you look closely enough, you'll also notice there's a key-ring attached to the zipper on my pants. My brother-in law, Kevin, wondered if he were to tug on the ring, would a parachute open! My cousin, Jonathan, asked if pulling on the ring would release my airbag!

When you hear me talk, you will notice my voice is weakening. The slurring is due largely to weakness in my tongue, while the slowing down of the soft palette in my mouth gives my voice a nasal quality. When I asked the speech

This has been a wilderness experience for us both literally and figuratively — biblically and theologically. I have found this time valuable in making the transition into a new way of living and working. The wilderness is where we learn how to pray, where we learn how to trust more fully and more completely in the care of God. The wilderness is the place where our mission and purpose are given shape. It is where the angels of God wait on us. This has been my experience over the past few months. Apparently, the wilderness is also where one can learn how to grow a beard! And many of you will have heard by now that Susan and I are expecting a baby in May. Of course, we are thrilled with this prospect, something we look forward to with great joy.

Because of the disease, my body is growing weaker all the time, but my spirit is strong and is, in fact, growing stronger every day. As the Apostle Paul said, "Although our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day." I am experiencing a renewed sense of calling to the ministry of Jesus Christ. Where this calling will lead, I am not sure. But that's no different from how it has been in the past. I continue to put my trust in the power of God's Holy Spirit to bring healing in the name of Christ. I am thrilled to be part of God's dream here on earth. I look forward to sharing with all of you how this ministry will take shape in the days, weeks, months and years to come.

I express my gratitude to my family and friends who share my burdens and are committed to companionship along this path we walk. And for my beloved Susan who endures my frustrations and makes my joy complete. I thank God for the people of Knox who have demonstrated a desire to remain with me through prayer, through words of encouragement and through ongoing financial support. Your generosity is remarkable.

It brings to mind a story of something that happened a few years ago at the Seattle Special Olympics. Nine contestants, all physically or mentally disabled, assembled at the starting line for the 100-yard dash. At the gun, they all took off — not exactly in a dash but with the strong desire to run the race to the finish and win. All, that is, except one boy who stumbled

y body is growing weaker all the time, but my spirit is strong and is, in fact, growing stronger every day

given to us by God, of who we are and of who we are called to be, fuels our enthusiasm and energy. We are all part of a great, holy dream that comes from God alone. Speaking personally, while this particular stage of my journey is coming to an end, and I am no longer officially the minister at Knox Church in Waterdown, none the less, I will never cease to be a minister. My ministry in the future will be different than it was in the past; yet, I will always remain closely connected to Knox Church. You will forever be part of who I am.

Many ask how I am doing. As you may know, ALS is a progressive and fatal disease that relentlessly attacks the motor neurons. Despite this hard truth, in the face of which I harbour few illusions, it is purely by the grace of God and the gifts of faith and hope that God has placed within me that I can dare to dream.

Yes, I am growing weaker overall; but, thankfully, for me, this is happening less rapidly than average. My hands and arms continue to weaken, and I am a little shakier on my feet than I was six months ago. After consulting with the occupational and physiotherapists, we

pathologist whether it would help to eat an ice cream cone every day, she smiled insincerely and said, "Ha - ha - ha." These days, I am most easily understood in a quiet room with a few people.

I am also told I need to breathe more frequently as I speak, about every three or four words or thereabouts (unlike my sister Nancy who, when she's on a roll, can probably spit out a couple of hundred words before inhaling). And I'm supposed to e-nun-ci-ate more clearly. For instance, instead of saying "Shaddapp!", I should say, "Would - you - please - shut - your - mouth!" The good news is that I have no trouble swallowing, and my breathing is stronger than average. This, of course, is encouraging. So far, there is no sign of deterioration in the muscles that allow me to breathe. This will come as no surprise to those who believe that preachers are, by nature, full of hot air. I have attended enough presbytery meetings to attest to some truth behind that stereotype. Today, however, I, for one, count myself happily among the long-winded.

Susan and I have been living in Vancouver in Muskoka since last fall.

on the asphalt, tumbled over a couple of times and began to cry. The other eight heard the boy cry. They slowed down and paused. Then, one by one, they turned around and went back. One girl with Down's syndrome bent down, kissed the boy and said, "This will make it better." Then, all nine linked arms and walked to-

gether to the finish line. Everyone in the stadium stood and cheered for 10 minutes. Today, I thank you all for turning around and coming back.

And, now, as it says in the letter to the Hebrews: "Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that

clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith ... " **R**

Chris Vais is currently living with his wife, Susan, in Vankoughnet, Ontario, awaiting the birth of their first child and dreaming about future ministries.



Guideposts

Celebrating Our Heritage



Photo courtesy of Presbyterian Church Archives

Knox College, champions for 1879-80.

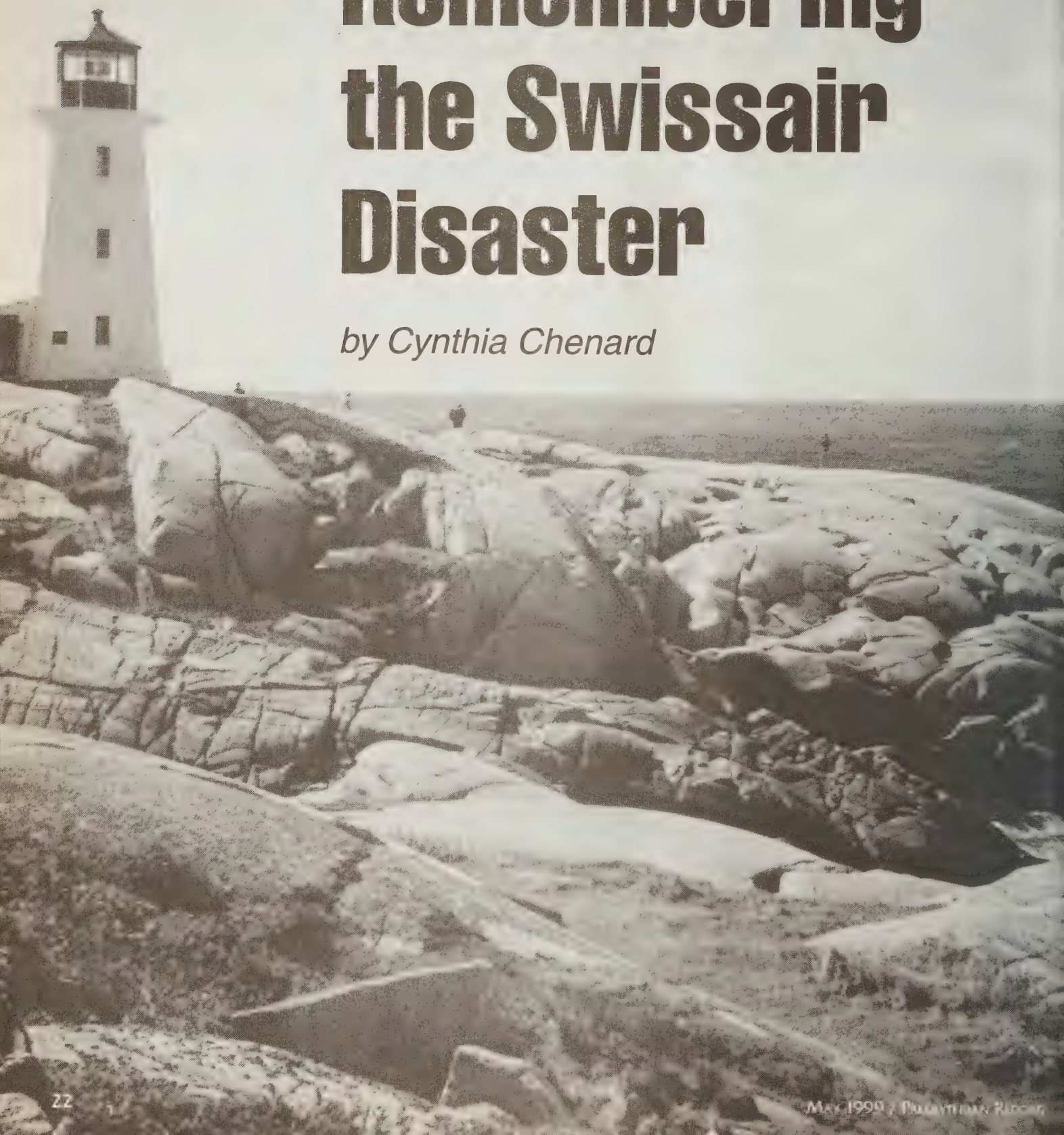
This month, students will graduate from three Presbyterian theological colleges. Knox College began as a college of the Canadian Free Presbyterian Church after the Disruption of 1844 in Scotland. It was incorporated in 1858 and has produced more graduates than any other Canadian Protestant theological institution. The Presbyterian

College in Montreal was founded in 1864 in response to the Free Church's interest in missions, particularly in French-Canadian evangelism. Through St. Andrew's Hall at the Vancouver School of Theology, the Presbyterian Church works co-operatively with the Anglican and United churches in training ministers.

Out of the Depths:

Remembering the Swissair Disaster

by Cynthia Chenard



**“Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.
Lord, hear my voice! ...
For with the Lord there is steadfast love,
and with him is great power to redeem.”**

(Psalm 130:1-2a, 7b)

My biggest challenge of the Swissair disaster came one day in early October. The command centre summoned me to the personal effects hangar to meet a family who had just arrived. Gary Hicks (RCMP Employees Assistance Program Co-ordinator) and Fr. Lloyd O'Neill (RCMP Chaplaincy Program Co-ordinator) always tried to have a chaplain available when families arrived, not only for their benefit but for RCMP members as well.

I found Priska, the recent widow, standing in a small room viewing all she had left of her husband at that point — part of his leather wallet containing a photograph of the two of them. Her children, ages 12, 14 and 15, stood quietly beside her. When her 14-year-old daughter, Linda, began to cry, it seemed her tears could not be stopped though we did what we could to offer comfort. This was Priska Zimmerman, the pilot's wife, and their three children.

Normally, families were taken to the edge of the water at Peggy's Cove. In this case, the site co-ordinator informed me, the family would be taken six miles out on the open ocean to the crash site. I would go with them. Thankfully, the sea was calm.

Seven of us crowded onto the 7.5-metre boat with nowhere to sit but the two seats in the wheelhouse. I held Linda as she continued to weep. Andrea, the 15-year-old, stood stoically with her mother. When we arrived at the site, the engines were cut. The only sound was the distant coast guard vessel circling. We sat in silence, in tears and in prayer for what seemed an eternity but was probably half an hour. When Mrs. Zimmerman indicated she was ready to go, the boat turned toward the famous Peggy's Cove lighthouse.

My involvement in the Swissair disaster began when I arrived at the temporary morgue in Hangar B at CFB Shearwater early Thursday morning, September 3rd. Swissair Flight 111 had crashed into our waters less than 12 hours before. I came, summoned not by any person but by an inner voice that simply said “Go.” Never had I felt so called, so commanded to do something. My legs felt weak as I stood at the gaping door of Hangar B. The floor was marked off with yellow tape holding down sheets of plastic, each line of yellow designating where one of the 229 bodies would be laid. Doubting my ability to cope with what might lie ahead, I asked myself, “What am I doing here?”

Each day brought a new realization of the magnitude of this tragedy. Dr. John Butt, chief medical examiner for the province of Nova Scotia, briefed the medical personnel, the military and RCMP teams that first morning. We knew then that none of the precise yellow-taped plastic spaces would be occupied by “bodies.” That day, with others, I cried out to God.

God answered in overt and subtle ways. God's comfort came in the teamwork and encouragement that was second to none throughout those heart-wrenching days. It came in the morgue, where teams of medical, military and RCMP personnel handled each part of human remains with utmost respect and care in the intense work of obtaining and matching DNA samples. In Hangar A, other teams painstakingly sorted through unbelievably small pieces of plane

Photo by Const. Mona Eichman, RCMP

We don't see him very much any more. He used to come every morning for food and shelter. He had no income, and he lived under a bridge. Often, he would yell or mutter curses at "presences" unseen to us. He has come to recognize the Hall staff and volunteers as friends. We helped him to apply for support and housing. Now he has a room in a house where he gets regular meals. Now he is less dependent on us and more independent. That's why, in a way, we're delighted that we don't see him very much any more.

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debris and personal effects to find as many answers as possible for the grieving families. Though we saw, touched and handled the pieces ourselves, we could not comprehend the complete and utter destruction of the jet. The plane and its contents appeared to have passed through a paper shredder. Dedicated men and women worked long hours to try to bring some sense of closure and comfort to the families of Flight 111. God heard our cries and answered through the gifts these people brought to their investigation

By mid-morning on Thursday, the RCMP Chaplains/Employees Assistance Program had adopted me. Along with 21 other chaplains from various denominations around the province (including one other Presbyterian, Glen Matheson, of New Glasgow), I worked to provide sup-

workers at the morgue. Another chaplain, Fr. Bill Burke, and I met with Dr. Butt to make arrangements. To help in my sermon preparation, Dr. Butt gave me a large envelope of mail he had received — notes, letters, cards, pictures, poems of encouragement and gratitude, prayers and support. Most came from people he had never met, people from all over the world, assuring us we were not alone but that God's arms upheld us through the compassion and prayers of people around the globe. On a Thursday morning at 8 o'clock, amid the sights and smells of the hangar that housed the morgue, more than 100 people gathered to worship God. We gave thanks and asked for strength and courage to carry on. "How Great Thou Art" rang out. We prayed for the families whose loved ones

People often say it takes a disaster to build community, to pull people together. Maybe that is one way God redeems the tragedies in our lives

port to families as well as to the RCMP personnel. Those of us who live close to CFB Shearwater and Peggy's Cove were on site nearly every day: sometimes a 12-hour shift at Peggy's Cove, sometimes a couple of hours with a family to view the personal effects at Shearwater, sometimes simply getting coffee and hanging around so that those working could talk to someone if they wished.

I cannot remember when I felt God's presence so strong and powerful as during the many hours spent at Peggy's Cove, the morgue or at the personal effects hangar. So many questions and so few answers yet, in uncountable ways, we shared God's strengthening spirit with one another as the community of relief workers became a family of concern for one another. Answers to the cries for strength and comfort were heard.

A memorial service was held on "the rocks" at the Peggy's Cove lighthouse for the RCMP members and their families a week after the plane went down. Those who worked on the wharf and met the families requested it. A few days later, another request for a service — this time from the RCMP and medical

had been so tragically taken from them. Tears were shed and hands were held as God's love surrounded us like a blanket of warmth on a cold winter's day.

Both worship services were requested. For me, this was a sign that people recognized their need for God's strength and believed that God hears the cries of the people.

I continue to struggle with the great loss of life, the overwhelming emotions of family grief, and the theological arguments of "accident" versus "fate" or "their time was up." I believe God wept with us. I know Christ's love and the light of Christ's hope shone brightly in the midst of the darkness we encountered. Those who offered their gifts — crossing denominational boundaries, differences of culture, rank or office — testified to God's presence. The love for strangers shown not only by area clergy but also by the residents of Peggy's Cove — fishermen and countless volunteers — fulfilled Christ's mandate to love one another and our neighbours as ourselves.

The power of hope in the face of tragedy, the power of love in the face of loss and the power of faith in the

face of unanswered questions touched all those who spent time with any aspect of the Swissair Flight 111 tragedy. I felt the steadfast love of God in the people with whom I worked, in the support given by my husband and colleagues, and in the encouragement offered by the people of Iona congregation in Dartmouth.

People often say it takes a disaster to build community, to pull people together. Maybe that is one way God redeems the tragedies in our lives. God's power of redemption was evident in the faces of those who came to our shores to say farewell to loved ones lost at sea, in words of deep thanks and in the memories of unforgettable love.

Twelve-year-old Michel steered the boat as we headed back to Peggy's Cove with the Zimmermans. Andrea sat with me at the back of the boat, crying from the depths of her heart for the father she had lost. About half-way back to the wharf, a commotion arose in the wheelhouse. Andrea and I discovered two whales frolicking about 300 metres off the bow of the boat. Mrs. Zimmerman asked what kind of whales they were. The coast guard officer hesitated, then replied slowly, "They're pilot whales." I held my breath.

"What a wonderful sign of life," she responded quietly.

Seals dived beside the boat as we followed the whales into nooks and crannies along the coastline. The children squealed with excitement. We smiled as they found joy in the midst of heartache. "Cynthia," Mrs. Zimmerman said to me, "you know you live in a zoo."

By the time we arrived back at the wharf, a broken family had begun to take the first steps toward healing. The psalmist's words about God's "steadfast love and power to redeem" became a reality to me that afternoon. The day had begun, like this whole experience, with a challenge I wondered if I could meet. But I will always remember it as a day of honour and privilege, a day of life and undeniable hope. ■

Cynthia Chenard is minister at Iona Church in Dartmouth, N.S., and a chaplain for the RCMP "H" division.

Faces of Faith



Brita Housez, a member of St. Giles Church, St. Catharines, Ontario, has a remarkable record of cultural, international and academic achievements and experiences. Born in Germany, she moved with her parents to France and received part of her early education in Paris. When she was seven years old, the family moved to Canada. Brita attended Acadia University in Nova Scotia, graduating in 1964 with a BA. Fluently trilingual, she returned to France to study at the University of Grenoble. After teaching English there, she returned to Canada and worked as a communications consultant and, later, as a public relations consultant.

Brita is a gifted landscape artist in oils. She has frequently donated her paintings to worthy causes for fund-raising purposes. The past 3 ½ years, however, have been devoted to the preparation and publication of a cookbook entitled *Tofu Mania*. "The aim of the book," she says, "is to demystify tofu, and to make it a common, healthy ingredient in most dishes" (see Reviews). Brita is a gracious and caring person. She says she is not a committee person but likes to help other people at a personal and individual level.

What is your earliest memory of church life?

My mother playing the organ at our church in Paris, France

What is your favourite hymn?

"Great Is Thy Faithfulness"

What is your favourite biblical book, and why?

St. Luke's Gospel because it contains the Parable of the Good Samaritan and is about helping people

What book (outside of the Bible) has most influenced you?

The Power of Your Subconscious Mind by Joseph Murphy

Where do you find inspiration to sustain your faith?

The Bible, prayer and meditation

Who has played a major role in your faith journey?

Pastor Peters, in my teen years, and Rev. Ian McPherson when he was minister of Union Presbyterian Church in Terra Cotta, Ontario

What is your biggest regret?

Not having had definite goals earlier in life

What has been your greatest joy in life?

My daughters Bettina and Lara

What one change in the church would make it substantially better?

More spiritual preparation for confirmation

If you could live a second time, who would you like to be?

Myself — but I would like to start out where I left off, resulting in a wiser, more tolerant, patient and serene me

Write your own epitaph.

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want" — because this verse was given to me by my minister when I was confirmed at the age of 13

A New DaySpring Arises

by Ivor Williams

Somewhat behind schedule and somewhat over budget, London, Ontario's newest Presbyterian church held its first services in its new building in January. The DaySpring congregation numbers fewer than 40 members, but Sunday services usually attract about 70 people.

The little suburban congregation of DaySpring Presbyterian Church first gathered in 1992 beneath the big clock in the centre court of London's Masonville Mall (before Sunday shopping made that impractical). They later moved into temporary space at the Boy Scouts' Spencer Hall. But, now, they have their own building — a structure planned not only as a church for worship but as a building to serve many needs in the growing area of northeast London.

A Presbyterian congregation (St. Andrew's) was formed in the area in 1982, with services at Stoneybrook Public School. After some initial work, the project was abandoned; but the idea, the site and a lot of will remained. DaySpring's studies of its area needs showed that a building was necessary to "connect" with the community and to contribute a sense of commitment and permanence. But they did not want a building that would be a heavy financial burden and detract from other community missions.

Community meetings to explain the use of the site and the congregation's plans were held in the nearby Good Shepherd Lutheran Church and in Siloam United Church. The kitchen in St. Jude's Anglican Church was in continuous use supporting DaySpring when building crews were at work, with other volunteers preparing the food for the outside workers.

Preliminary work for the DaySpring building site was mostly on schedule.

Volunteers started work in mid-May 1998. Grading and preparation of the site at the corner of Adelaide Street and Philbrook Drive was completed, and most of the construction work scheduled before excavation began. But there were various hold-ups, such as relocating the vehicle entrance to the property as ordered by the city's fire department.



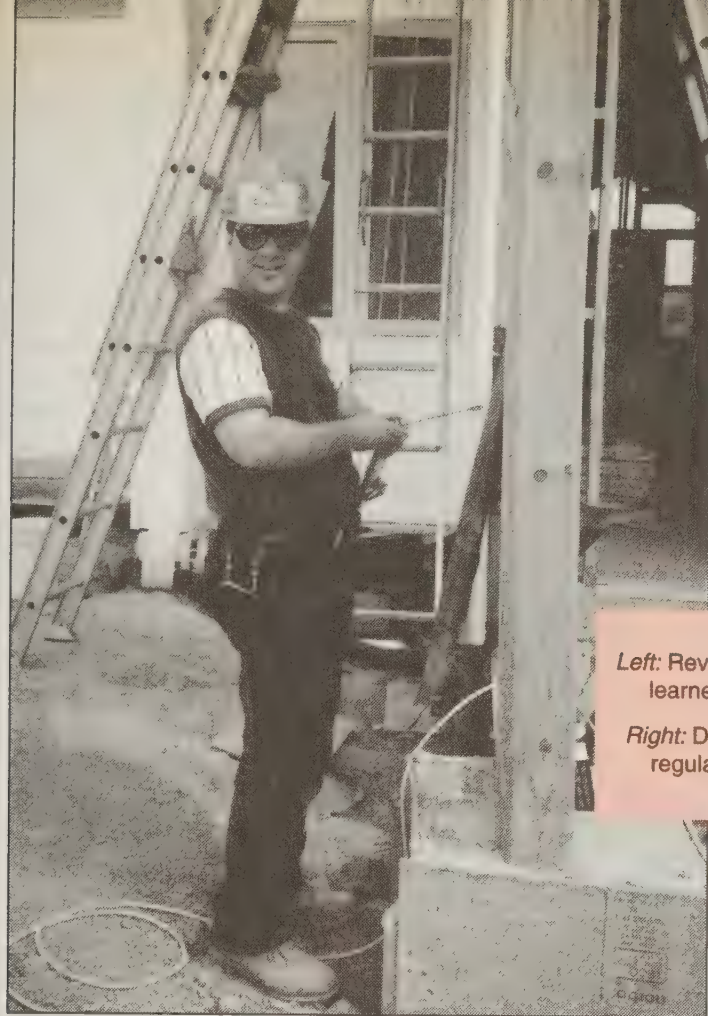
*London's newest
Presbyterian church uses
volunteer labour to build
a structure for worship
and community outreach*

It had been anticipated that a mostly volunteer (but not entirely amateur) effort involving about 300 people (members of the congregation, neighbours in the community, other Presbyterians and young church members from as far away as Ottawa) might complete the multipurpose building's 675 square metres over a few weeks during the warm days and evenings of last summer. "There used to be barn-raising in the country, but this is a church-raising in the city," said Lindsay Moir, co-ordinator of the volunteers expected to assist the DaySpring project. But that massive support tended to fade away after the unanticipated delays of a permit hassle and demands for changes stalled the start.

Some who had committed holiday periods to work on the project could no longer help. The delays resulted in rescheduling some of the construction work, increasing the work hours for many volunteers or contracting out some work. The load descended on a core of DaySpring members and the remaining volunteers. "It certainly didn't help my golf game," laughed Don Speir. A retired farmer and business operator, he was at the site daily, learning new building skills as he went. Draftsman Bill Fletcher supervised the dry-wall installation and, says Terry Hastings, minister of DaySpring, "did most of it."

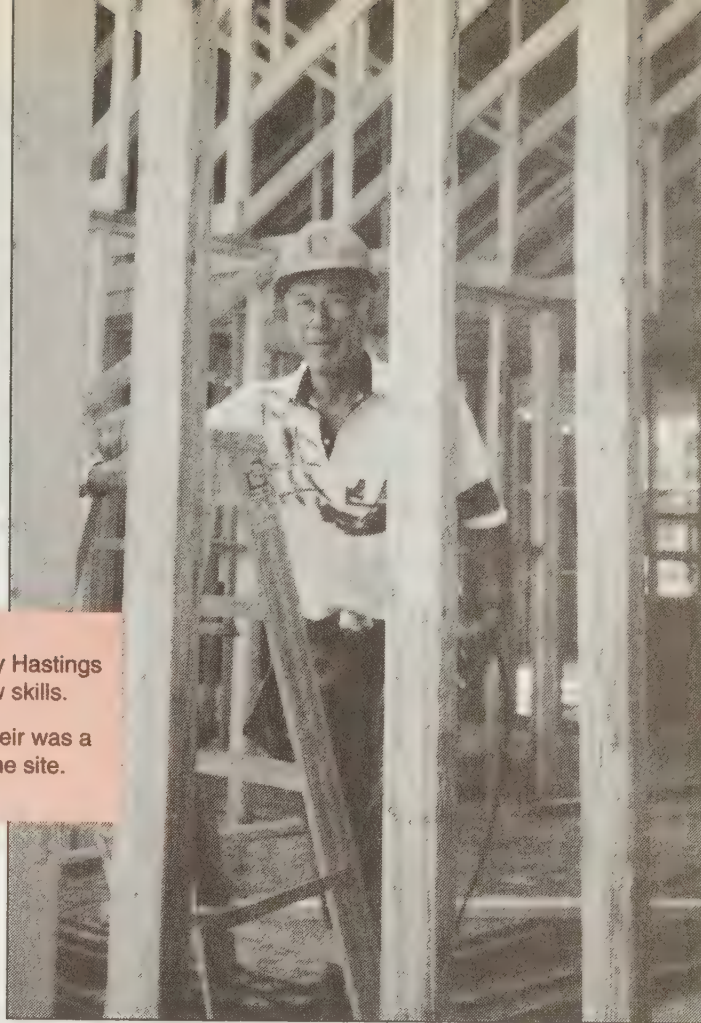
"We are a small congregation and we were pushed to the limit to make this happen," said John Tarasuk, a professor of engineering at the University of Western Ontario. As a leader in the Habitat for Humanity home building projects in London, he believed the experience gained there could be utilized to reduce costs for the congregation's project. "We can create a significant building which will serve the needs of the neighbourhood and the congregation," he said. He believes the successful example of the DaySpring project may help excite others about the possibilities of working together on church or other community projects.

All the initial building activities were carefully scheduled, with preliminary work being done during the day. "The big push" came between 4:30 and 8 p.m. "and all day on Saturdays." For instance, the rafters were to be put in place on Wednesday through Friday, with shingling and sheeting crews expected to move in on the following Saturday. Skilled, experienced crew leaders were in charge of each operation. All the necessary information about construction was compiled on an easily accessed data base set up by Lorraine



Left: Rev. Terry Hastings learned new skills.

Right: Don Speir was a regular at the site.



Stevenson, wife of the minister. Want eight dry-wallers Saturday at 10:30 a.m.? Consult the list. There were about 30 pools of volunteers, all categorized into skills offered and times available.

Volunteer DaySpring recruiters, members of the DaySpring building team, visited congregations throughout the presbytery and beyond, seeking volunteer builders and other forms of support. They knew what they were talking about: hard work, long hours, no pay. But there would be dividends paid in satisfaction. Dozens of volunteers, recruited mainly from other Presbyterian churches in the Presbytery of London (which links about 26 congregations in Middlesex and Elgin counties), helped in the framing, shingling, painting, plumbing and all the tasks that go into a finished building under the watchful eyes and supervision of volunteer skilled construction workers. Various London congregations prepared and delivered snacks, drinks, sandwiches and even hot meals to sustain the workers through the blistering heat of many summer days.

Knox Church in Goderich provided carpenters. And the Presbyterian workers were frequently joined by non-affiliated neighbours in the community who kept

dropping by and offering to help, including one who designed the interior colour schemes. Young people ages 12 to 15 were able to assist when accompanied by an adult supervisor. There were some hard hats available, but helpers were requested to bring their own if possible.

Contractor Bruce Stoll, a member of the congregation, was project manager. He used many of his contacts in the industry to get the assistance necessary to co-ordinate the work of the volunteers. He managed the project on the run, linked by his cellular phone to his own construction business and to Fanshawe College where he teaches in the civil architecture division. His lawyer-wife, Susan Fincher-Stoll, made sure the legal requirements were properly tended to. Her fee? She, too, was a volunteer.

New St. James Church in London supported the project with substantial financial aid. A member of the Chalmers congregation volunteered to install the windows at cost. The women of Westmount Church in southwest London planned a kitchen shower to help outfit the new kitchen. They are also sharing the revenue they derive from grocery store receipts to provide some ready

cash. "Every congregation has committed something," says Hastings, and rural churches have shown a particular sense of community co-operation.

The major disappointment, however, was the lack of the promised massive support, especially in non-skilled areas. "Almost anyone can paint or do many of the less onerous building tasks," says Hastings. Some of the major volunteer effort came from outside the presbytery. Windsor and Goderich congregations provided assistance. As the volunteer workers tended to "evaporate" at the end of the summer, hired workers had to be called in for roofing, stuccoing and dry-walling.

But the project showed what a few people can do. The congregation is energized by their new building and the programs offered. They gathered proudly in mid-January for the dedication ceremony.

What did DaySpring learn from its project that might help others looking at a similar building effort?

1. Be prepared for the unexpected.
2. Don't assume someone is taking care of something.
3. Make sure everything (permits, volunteers, building schedule) is in place. "It must start that way!"

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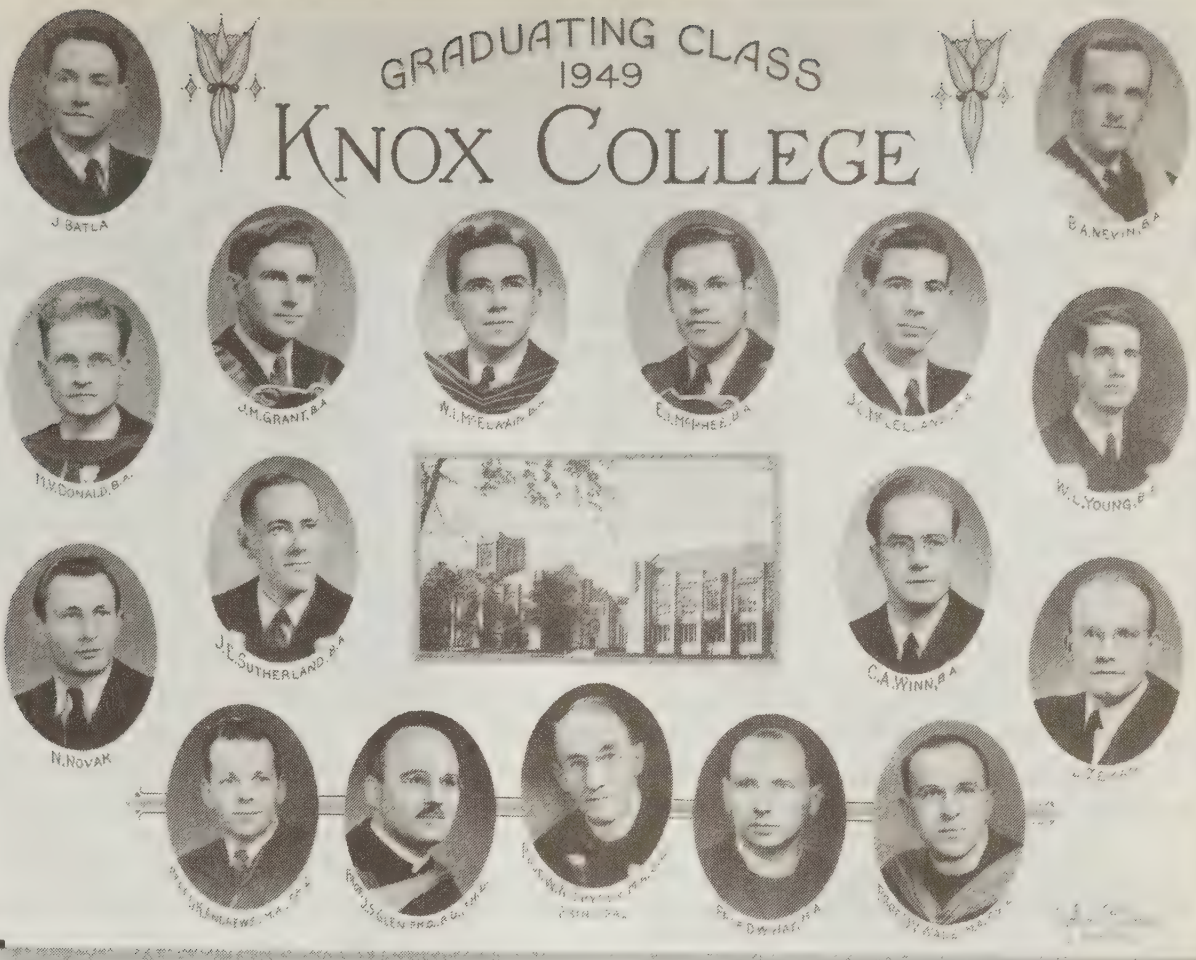
Terry Hastings came to the congregation in 1994 with support from the national church. He set about developing a church community that would eventually become an active presence in the community by offering single parent support programs, stress management seminars, a parish nursing program, youth outreach, Christian spirituality workshops and more. He says his job has been, and will continue to be, to help the congregation grow. He believes the new building will enable the congregation to be "pro-active agents within this active community." An outreach ministry to seniors is underway, offering a daytime lunch program and social and financial guidance. An innovation in the London area is a "home work and fun" project for children in grades 4 to 8. High school students and others offer tutoring and help with homework. Hastings sees a role for his church in all these areas for the community that has a diverse mix of homes as well as several other churches.

Early this year, volunteer builders and their supporters finished the donated food, cleared the property, put the furniture in place, picked up their tools and left the landscaped site. The congregation took over a large multipurpose area with moveable seats that will serve as the sanctuary, a common room with seating for 150, two smaller meeting areas, office space, a complete kitchen and an anticipated indebtedness of about \$150,000. It is expected the building will be valued at about \$900,000; construction cost was \$400,000. The congregation had accumulated about \$170,000 for the start of work, and fund-raising projects have continued.

"If we build it, they'll come," Lindsay Moir said. The new doors open easily to all in the area.

Note: The origin for the name of DaySpring comes from Luke 1:78 (KJV). It reads: "Through the tender mercy of our God, in which the dayspring from on high will visit us ..." Dayspring refers to Christ. The congregation has adopted the spelling with the capital S. R

Ivor Williams is a retired daily journalist, a member of Westmount Church in London, Ont., and a contributing editor of this magazine. (He cannot paint neatly, drive nails straight or lift heavy material, and was of no help to the DaySpring project.)



A Class Act

by Joseph C. McLelland

Fifty years ago, the 12 men graduating from Knox College reflected the changing nature of our post-war society. Eight were traditional theologues raised in our church and ready to serve the frontiers as Ordained Missionaries. We were "licensed to preach" the day after convocation. Of the other four, one was Baptist (seeking the best education?) and the others were visitors or refugees from European countries.

In those days, our church recognized the authority of Scripture and church courts. Doctrine was a serious matter, argued about and preached on; there was much room for originality and creativity,

even saintly eccentricity. It was a heady time for theologues: there was still a bitter hangover from Church Union, a struggle to define ourselves in more ecumenical ways, culminating in the 1947

Looking over 50 years of ministry

General Assembly in Calgary (Stanford Reid vs. Scott McKenzie). Work was beginning on Articles of Faith and the Declaration of Faith on Church and Nation. There was the stimulating revival of evangelical theology sparked by Karl Barth. And there was Perry Rockwood's

unsettling charge that "the church is sick unto death."

We took to heart the guidelines for theological education in our Book of Forms. In arts, we had concentrated on history, English, philosophy and the biblical languages of Hebrew and Greek. Two of our number had even spent three years at Toronto Bible College (now Tyndale Seminary) to prepare for Knox. This allowed us to spend three years exegeting Scripture, with preaching as the chief goal of our ministry. The theory was that the church is created and sustained in response to the Word of God in all its forms, with expository sermons at the heart. Pastoral visitation was a given

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(including prayer in the homes), and “counselling” was regarded as the normal part of the interaction of minister and people.

Our graduation portrait shows five professors. Principal Bryden was a kind of guru for us, giving a spin on church history that made it alive and controversial. David Hay’s systematics was a gem of organization and clarity; he also provided a detached introduction to Barth. Keith Andrews in Old Testament and Stanley Glen in New Testament offered complementary approaches that stimulated debate and critical thinking. In our second year, Donald Wade arrived with his intriguing approach to philosophy of religion and ethics.

Our teachers followed the survey method that took us through all the books of the Bible, all the centuries of church history and all the church doctrines. For this, we received a diploma; the BD was post-graduate. Now that everything has changed — from diploma to Master of Divinity, from coverage to specialization, from classic discipline to “skills learning” — it’s a good time to reflect on the old ways and their lessons. A recent survey of our class agreed we were given good preparation for a preaching ministry, if less so for more pastoral duties. Our summer mission fields and Ordained Missionary year added up to good experience, but without much supervision. Walter Bryden is remembered as having “a theological passion for the Gospel.”

So we celebrate our own Jubilee year. Some give thanks for families and friends — and supportive wives who considered themselves sharing a team ministry (which they did most effectively). One speaks of “the gift of a lifetime of privileges and opportunities.” Another laments the fact that “the call” with its responsibilities is being replaced by “the job” with its rights, allied with a new litigious spirit. One advises younger clergy: “Whatever gifts you bring to the ministry, the role of servant under Christ is essential.”

Back then, with small classes (and Margaret Wilson still chained in the rotunda), we had good professors but at a distance from us. So we were left to organize ourselves: besides sports teams and social events, we had Missionary

and Theological Society (M&T), Preaching Pool, and Knox Note Company. The M&T introduced us to visiting speakers as well as projects for the wider church. The Pool was a co-operative in which we “ran” pulpit supply all over the province (Englehart was the farthest) — a contingent of student preachers venturing out on Saturdays by train or bus and returning Monday mornings to hand in their stipends so all would share equally. As for the Note Company (Principal Bryden called us “Troublers of Israel”), it was an élite system of scribes taking notes in their specialties, run off on a primitive jelly duplicator and distributed to all. Six volumes are still in the hands of one of the three managers. For those in residence, an added advantage was the sharing with students in other colleges and faculties. I still meet some of them in my travels, still at work serving our church in ways suitable to their gifts. We theologues were in a seminary but not an ivory tower.

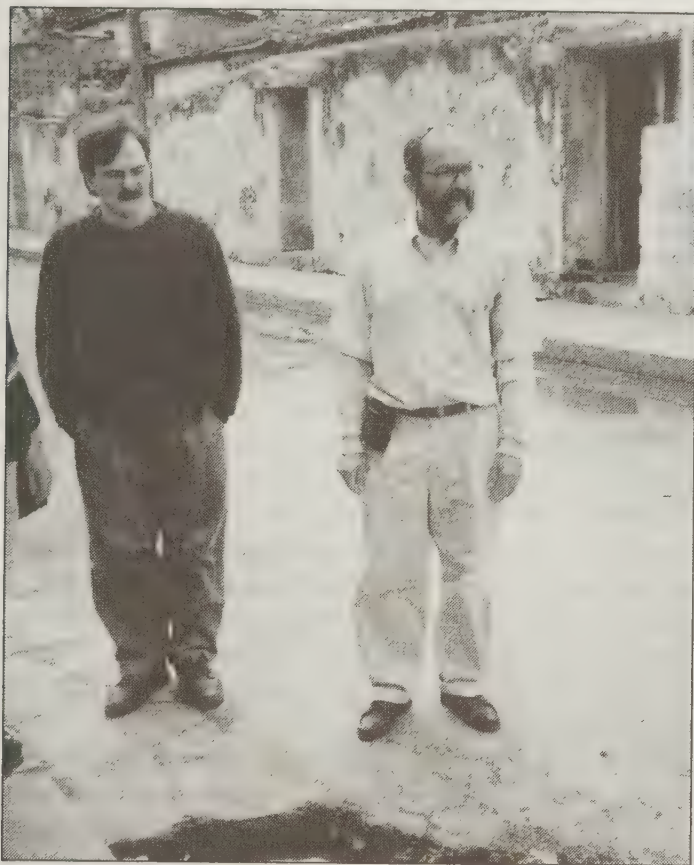
I think we did more good than harm as preachers with Learner’s Permits. We exchanged stories and compared notes. We came to recognize the signs of trouble or of blessing in the congregations we served. Each fall, we returned from The Field with more intensive data and a more mature perspective. A significant fact is that when we met with mission board staff (W. A. Cameron *et al.*) to arrange our field placements, a challenge was received for someone to go to a particularly difficult field ... We all volunteered, such was our sense of vocation. After graduation, we went our ways, as pastors or professors or executives. Among us, we’ve moderated presbyteries and synods and General Assemblies.

When we hold our 50th reunion this month, we’ll remember the two members who have died, compare our wrinkled and aching bodies, wax nostalgic for the good old days. Above all, we’ll thank the Lord for allowing us to study such a strange and marvellous Book and to serve such a strange and marvellous church all the days of our lives. **R**

Joseph C. McLelland is emeritus professor of McGill University and The Presbyterian College, Montreal, and a contributing editor of this magazine.

PCC News

Seminary students receive warm welcome in Cuba



Kevin MacDonald (left), a student at The Presbyterian College, Montreal, tours a housing project with the project leader.

growth could be seen in plans for an ecumenical "Celebracion Evangelica Cubana" to be held in May and June of this year.

But, as might be expected, the church in Cuba has many challenges to face. During a lecture at the Consejo de Iglesias de Cuba (the Cuban Council of Churches), Rev. Reinerio Arce spoke about a crisis of values in contemporary

giving assistance to churches so that they may effectively address these issues.

Churches are very much involved in the social needs of the people. This was obvious to the students when they toured housing projects, farming projects, projects for the elderly and the Christian Centre for Reflection and Dialogue in Matanzas. The last stop for the group was at Ceserse, a social and educational centre in Varadero and a place where the elderly and handicapped children can spend a vacation in a supportive environment. The centre is a project of the Presbyterian church in Varadero, Iglesia Presbiteriana Reformada, Dora Valentin. At one time, this church had only one member; but, with perseverance, there are now about 90 members. Four years ago, the congregation dedicated its new church building — the first church building erected since the revolution in 1959. The pastor is Dora Arce Valentin, one of seven women Presbyterian pastors in Cuba.

It was a week filled with kindness and discovery. Many connections were made and the partnership between The Presbyterian Church in Canada and the Presbyterian Reformed Church in Cuba was strengthened. *(From a report by Carol Smith)*

Leaving winter behind, a group of Presbyterians travelled to Cuba in February and found more than a warm climate waiting for them. When the in-ministry class of The Presbyterian College, Montreal, disembarked at the Varadero Airport, they were greeted by Lic. Morima Gonzalez and translator Mario Rangel. From that moment on, Cuba and the Cuban people became teachers and hosts of the finest kind. The entire week became a rich learning experience for the students, for group leader Geoffrey Johnston of The Presbyterian College and for Carol Smith, a member of the international affairs committee who accompanied the group.

Visits to churches in Mantanzas and the Seminario Evangelico de Teologia helped to convey the hopes and struggles of the church in Cuba. Ofelia Ortega, the seminary's rector, touched on one hopeful sign when he spoke of the recent increase in the number of students attending the college. Another sign of

Cuba. To that end, the church council has formed an interdisciplinary advisory group of pastors, theologians, economists and others. Part of the new reality for Cuba, and associated with the growth of tourism, is the rise in prostitution and drug-related problems. The council is

PWS&D responds to crisis in Kosovo

As the world watches, the humanitarian crisis in Kosovo continues to escalate. Tens of thousands of ethnic-Albanian refugees are fleeing into neighbouring Albania, Macedonia and Montenegro. Presbyterian World Service and Development is involved in the region through two emergency relief agencies: Action by Churches Together (ACT) and the Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFGB). Both are closely monitoring the situation to determine the most appropriate and effective responses.

The CFGB, with co-ordination by the Mennonite Central Committee Canada, is arranging for a \$130,000 food shipment to the refugee camps. This will supply food packets for Bosnian and Croatian refugees as well as Kosovar internally displaced persons in Montenegro. Six containers with wheat, lentils, oil and sugar are currently en route. PWS&D has contributed \$10,000 to this relief effort.

You may make a donation through your church offering, clearly marking your gift "PWS&D — Kosovo," and ask the treasurer to forward it quickly. Or send a donation directly to: Presbyterian World Service and Development, 50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, Ont. M3C 1J7.



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Arthur Van Seters elected Moderator-Designate

Arthur Van Seters, who retires this summer as principal of Knox College, Toronto, has been elected Moderator-Designate of the 125th General Assembly. Van Seters was elected from a slate of three candidates in a vote by all members of presbyteries across Canada. On the evening of June 6, at the opening of the General Assembly in Kitchener, Ontario, his name will be placed before the Assembly as the official nominee. Although the opportunity exists for further nominations at the Assembly, the Moderator-Designate has always been elected Moderator since the practice was instituted.

After serving pastorates in New Brunswick, Quebec and Ontario, Van Seters has spent the past 25 years of ordained ministry in education. He served as the director of the Montreal Institute for Ministry, principal of the Vancouver School of Theology and, for the past six years, principal of Knox College.

Assembly Council faces intriguing dilemma

FLAMES were everywhere at the March meeting of Assembly Council. The two-day meeting listened to presentations from the Life and Mission Agency, with the various ministries outlining their FLAMES initiatives.

FLAMES is the acronym for a six-year focus on specific areas of ministry: Focus on youth, Laity equipping, Active evangelism, Mission, Education: clergy and laity, and Spirituality. Rev. Mark Lewis, convener of Assembly Council and of the Fanning the FLAMES Committee, showed a video on FLAMES which will be sent to all churches this spring. Other FLAMES paraphernalia such as banners, mugs and pens will also be available to help churches become involved in the initiative.

One of the most intriguing issues facing the council focused on what to do with \$1.4 million in excess funds for Presbyterians Sharing.... The 124th General Assembly last year determined that the pension fund would no longer receive a portion of its contributions from Presbyterians Sharing.... That decision was made in June, to be retroactive to January 1, 1998. Consequently, Presbyterians Sharing... ended the year with the excess funds.

Assembly Council faced two issues: the manner in which the excess funds oc-

curred and the actual disposition of those funds. Earlier in its meeting, Assembly Council dealt with a report from the pension fund regarding trust law liability.

Even though the \$1.4 million in revenue was given to Presbyterians Sharing..., rather than specifically to the pension fund, there were concerns that the denomination has a legal obligation to maintain a certain level of funding for pensions.

What to do with the \$1.4 million, therefore, became an issue. Is there a legal obligation to place those funds (or a portion of them) in the pension fund? Who determines which ministry projects should receive these funds? The General Assembly Office was charged with the responsibility of obtaining a legal opinion on the trust law issue.

A year ago, the church offices management team prepared a list of ministry priorities which could be funded by this excess in Presbyterians Sharing.... It was prepared with considerable input from the Life and Mission Agency, Presbyterian colleges and other departments. Assembly Council was given authority to endorse or amend that list but decided, instead, to refer the entire matter to General Assembly so that the broader body could decide. Before June, the trust law issue will be investigated and its outcome reported to General Assembly. (Keith Knight)



Saskatchewan congregation in solidarity with Christians in Sierra Leone



On March 17, 1999, 53 people gathered at St. Andrew's Church, Saskatoon, for a Lenten rice supper to demonstrate solidarity with Christians in Sierra Leone. An additional 17 people attended the worship service that followed the meal.

When participants arrived at the church hall for supper, they signed a guest register. The register was later sent to Rev. Eustace Renner, a minister from Waterloo, Sierra Leone, with whom St. Andrew's has a special relationship [see "A Few Crumbs From the Table, December 1998 *Presbyterian Record*]. Nametags in the shape of Sierra Leone were filled out to include the name of a Christian from Waterloo in Sierra Leone; e.g., "In Christ, I, Stephanie, am a sister of Laura of Sierra Leone." (Names were chosen from a list of popular names for men, women and children in Waterloo.) Dinner consisted of a scoop of rice, two pieces of bread, a small quantity of sauce and some water to drink — a bountiful meal in a country where many are starving. There were also display boards describing the current situation in Sierra Leone.

Friends of Eustace Renner led the worship service that included lively music such as might be heard at a service in Sierra Leone. A tape of the service was sent to Waterloo. An offering totalling \$1,500 was also sent to Renner for his work with the people of Sierra

Leone. (To date, the congregation has donated \$3,000 to his relief work.)

Through telephone calls and faxes with Renner, St. Andrew's has learned that the rebel forces that threw Waterloo County into chaos with a military coup in May 1997 have been overcome. Peace talks have been taking place and the rebels seem tired of fighting. There is some good drinking water available but very little sanitation. Ninety per cent of the homes in Waterloo, including Renner's, have been burned. A displacement camp for 5,000 people has been set up in the Waterloo Community Centre. Everyone is scavenging for food. (from a report by Mary Jane Hanson of St. Andrew's Church, Saskatoon)

Montreal congregation has busy day

Perhaps, the congregation of the Presbyterian Church of the Town of Mount Royal, Montreal, read the February 1999 *Presbyterian Record* cover story about Presbyterians of African heritage bringing new life to the church. Whatever the case, in a service held February 7, 14 Ghanaian members were welcomed into the congregation, three children were baptized, and Holy Communion was celebrated.

Guest minister Joseph McLelland baptizes Oheneba Akua Amoateng at a special service held at the Presbyterian Church of the Town of Mount Royal.



Paulette Brown receives YWCA Women of Distinction award

Rev. Paulette Brown, minister of University Church, Toronto, is the 1999 recipient of the YWCA Women of Distinction award for Religion and Community Leadership.

Brown is the founder of "Created for Life," a multifaceted program for African-Canadian youth aimed at helping young black people explore their common heritage and values. She has also been a leader in PLURA, an ecumenical coalition that provides funding for low income people. Described as "a creative 'bringer' between cultures and generations," Brown has worked to develop awareness and involvement among congregations in the area of racial and ethnic diversity. She has been a strong advocate for black women who, she believes, face numerous obstacles in daily life.

Brown is one of seven women to receive the 1999 award. She is the first Presbyterian minister to be honoured. [Editor's note: For more information on Paulette Brown and her work with black youth, see "Created for Life," February 1999 *Presbyterian Record*.]

Other News

Taiwan and Ontario communities twin

Two congregations in Embro, Ontario — Knox Presbyterian and Knox United — were given a visible reminder of the work of pioneer missionary George Leslie Mackay when Dr. Neng-Che Yeh of Tamsui Oxford University College in Taiwan visited them last year. Embro native Dr. Mackay built the college more than 100 years ago with \$6,215 raised mostly through the efforts of congregations in Oxford County, Ontario. Today, the school has an enrolment of 6,000 students.

"The purpose of this visit is to say thank you to God and to Oxford County for donating the funds to build Oxford College," said Yeh.

"This is a very important reminder of our roots, of what this whole area was built on," said Rev. Andy Turnbull of Knox Presbyterian Church, Embro, of Yeh's visit. Turnbull called the ecumenical effort by area churches to build Tamsui College "mind-boggling in its scope."

Upon returning to Taiwan, Dr. Yeh

suggested a proposal for the twinning of Tamsui and Woodstock, Ontario. The Council of the County of Oxford adopted that proposal last year. A similar tie between Canadian and Taiwanese Presbyterian churches at the synod level is also being considered. (Source: *Woodstock Sentinel-Review*)

U.S. academic wins Templeton Prize

Ian Barbour, an American college professor and leading advocate of dialogue between scientists and theologians, has won the 1999 Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion. By winning the 1999 award, valued this year at 750,000 pounds sterling (\$1.24 million US) — the world's largest annual award — 75-year-old Barbour joins the ranks of Billy Graham, Alexander Solzhenitsyn and the late Mother Teresa who have been recognized by the John Templeton Foundation for "advancing the understanding of God and/or spirituality." The 1998 winner was Sir Sigmund Sternberg, a businessman, philanthropist and longtime leader in dialogue between Christians and Jews.

In a citation nominating Barbour for the prize, the foundation quoted one of his colleagues who said that no one "has made a more original, deep and lasting contribution toward the needed integration of scientific and religious knowledge and values. With respect to the breadth of topics and fields brought into this integration, Barbour has no equal." (*ENI*)

Church Council calls for public education on country's addiction to punishment

The proposed, new youth justice law should serve as a wake-up call to Canadians for urgent public education about the extent of crime and our country's "addiction to punishment," according to The Church Council on Justice and Corrections. The government's announced priorities — rehabilitation, meaningful accountability, a reliance on less custody and more alternatives — are all well and good but will surely fail if the ensuing public debate remains fixated on "getting tough versus being lenient" and continues to equate justice with jail, the council says.

"This is a dead-end discussion not helping to create healthy or safer communities," commented Rick Prashaw, the council's youth justice co-ordinator. "The facts are clear. Nineteen of every 20 youths in Canada were accused of no crime last year. Canada incarcerates youth much more than most Western countries, uses diversion considerably less, and youth in Canada are imprisoned at four times the rate adults are. And this reliance on punishment and custody is not deterring crime and making our communities safer."

The council supports the government in not reducing the minimum age for young offenders below 12.

The Church Council on Justice and Corrections is made up of 11 national denominations, including The Presbyterian Church in Canada, representing approximately 14,000 congregations.



New president promises spiritual renewal for troubled Nigeria

Key church officials have called on Nigeria's citizens to accept the election of General Olusegun Obasanjo as the nation's new president and to put bitter argument over the election result behind them. At the same time, President-elect Obasanjo has promised that, under his democratic administration, the country will witness a spiritual rebirth, leading to political stability, a turnaround for the economy and improved living standards for the 100-million citizens of Africa's most populous nation.

General Obasanjo, who is a Baptist, said that the "abysmal depth" into which Nigeria's economy had sunk required efforts beyond "cosmic economic measures." "I believe whatever we plan to do in this country politically, economically

and socially, unless we embrace and pray for spiritual revival and regeneration, we are not going to get anywhere."

Many international observers are taking a wait-and-see attitude to the election of Obasanjo, pointing out that he faces massive problems in bringing order and productivity to Nigeria. Although he spent three years in jail under General Sani Abacha, Obasanjo is still widely seen as the favoured candidate of the military and, therefore, suspect for some Nigerians. But his supporters claim he is the best man to hold together a complex nation riven by ethnic rivalries.

Dr. Sunday Mbang, president of the nation's leading ecumenical organization, the Christian Association of Nigeria, described the outcome of the

Welcome to
St. Andrew's Church
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election as the result of God's will. Mbang, who is also the head of the Methodist Church of Nigeria with almost two million members, said the Nigerian people should accept the election result in good faith and be prepared to believe that God can make use of an "unfavoured" man. (ENI)

News Scan

Allan Boesak receives six-year sentence

Allan Boesak, former clergyman and leading campaigner against apartheid, has been sentenced in Cape Town to six years in jail by the Cape High Court for fraud and theft of 1.3 million rand (\$210,000 US at current exchange rates) in the 1980s that was meant for victims of apartheid. In sentencing Boesak, Judge John Foxcroft ignored a plea for mercy by an even more famous opponent of apartheid, Archbishop Desmond Tutu. In handing down the sentence, Judge Foxcroft said Boesak had been a senior churchman in a position of trust. Alluding to his role as an anti-apartheid activist, the judge added: "I know of no reason in law why a person who has done a great deal of good for his country should be exonerated and not be punished for common law offences." (ENI)

Ministers, check your steeples!

In the estimation of Jim Fryer, publisher of *Fryer's Site Guide* — a reference bible for wireless communications com-

panies searching for tower locations — 300 to 500 church steeples in the United States are serving as antenna sanctuaries. The Personal Communications Industry Association estimates that 60,000 new cellular perches will be needed by 2007. One of the most prominent placements is Washington, DC's National Cathedral where transmitters beam data down on 57 acres of the country's priciest real estate. Under a typical lease agreement in the United States, a single carrier might pay a parish \$1,000 per month to effectively own the steeple for 10 to 30 years. (Source: *Wired*)

But, you still have to stoop and scoop

"I totally believe in animals in heaven," says animal rights theologian Dr. Andrew Linzey. An Anglican priest and a member of Oxford University's theology faculty, Linzey is the author of several books on theology and animal welfare. His latest, *Animal Rites*, a book of liturgies for animals, is dedicated to a dog, Barney, "still wagging his tail in

heaven." According to Linzey: "The question is not will there be animals in heaven, but will humans be there. We are wicked, violent and selfish," he says, "although we have the unique capacity to judge the moral significance of our actions." (ENI)

They had different envelopes

The 1998 MOVIEGUIDE awards have named the 10 best family movies for 1998. Winning Teddy Bear Awards were: *The Prince of Egypt*, *A Bug's Life*, *The Parent Trap*, *Ever After*, *Antz*, *Wide Awake*, *The Borrowers*, *Mighty Joe Young*, *The Mask of Zorro*, *Madeline*. The 10 best movies for mature audiences, winners of Papa Bear Awards, were: *Simon Birch*, *A Civil Action*, *The Truman Show*, *Deep Impact*, *Les Misérables*, *Life is Beautiful*, *The Horse Whisperer*, *Armageddon*, *Men With Guns*, *The Man in the Iron Mask*. The MOVIEGUIDE Awards are sponsored by the John Templeton Foundation to recognize movies and television programs that are morally inspiring and spiritually uplifting. (ENI)

(Continued from page 4)

- pointless. The church and the theological college cannot instil this love and commitment, but they must take care not to approve and graduate those who will be little more than religious functionaries.
2. A love of people and a concern for their salvation and growth in grace. While some may be embarrassed by the words and intent of the old Ordination Question 6, it certainly goes to the heart of the matter: "Are zeal for the glory of God, love to the Lord Jesus Christ, and a desire for saving souls, so far as you know in your own heart, your great motives and chief inducements to enter (or continue in) the office of the ministry?"
 3. A love of the Scriptures, a love of learning and the discipline to continue to study the Scriptures and theology, as well as an understanding of the prevailing culture to which the Christian gospel needs to be addressed.
 4. A disciplined life of prayer, the devotional reading of the Bible and of the great spiritual classics (e.g., Augustine's *Confessions*, John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, etc.) and a concern for justice. The indicators for these areas and the point above are the quality of a minister's library and the number of hours devoted to study, sermon preparation, youth and adult education preparation. Which books, novels, newspapers, magazines or journals does the minister read? What about computer and Internet literacy? Indicators for the life of prayer and devotional reading are more difficult to get at directly, but it is usually evident whether this is happening. The concern for justice has practical manifestations.
 5. How effective are preaching, teaching and pastoral care within the congregation as well as outreach to and involvement in the life of the community?
 6. Is the congregation showing both intensive and extensive growth? Is there vitality in the life of the congregation and what are the signs of it?

7. What is the quality of Christian stewardship and is there a good level of support for the work of the congregation, Presbyterians Sharing..., Presbyterian World Service and Development, and additional congregational mission projects?

Perhaps, a few comments are in order for the above three questions. Where there is effective preaching, teaching, pastoral care, outreach and community involvement, the congregation and others know about it. Extensive growth is shown in statistics. Intensive growth in Christian knowledge and commitment is more difficult to measure, but there are ways of determining it. Financial indicators are often, but to be sure not always, a way of measuring the commitment and vitality of a congregation.

More could be written but, perhaps, this is sufficient to initiate a discussion which needs to take place.

Bice Klempa

Songs of the Spirit at Duchesne

These songs lift into the room the way fog clings when the sun finally comes through. It's as if the soul has become a mirror thing, a reflection of what music knows and words despite their genius can never explain.

Breath and wind and song all bloom like flowers along a garden path, an Eden hideaway where lambs and lions dream of streams filled with water so pure it quenches all the hungers of the world.

This music is of one mind, a choir breathing tones and harmonies all spun from one note, one moment of song flooding from the many the way a million raindrops fall from one cloud. A spirit is loose in the place. It is singing.

— Frederick Zydek

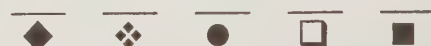
ArithmeCode by Dave Mitchell

Find the value of each symbol by doing the arithmetic. Replace each symbol with the letter which corresponds to its value to find the *ArithmeCode* word below. Category: **RELATED TO RUTH**

- i $(169 \div 6.5) - (6 \times 4) - 1 = \diamond$
- ii $(\diamond \times 3) + (1000 \div 10 \div 10) = \square$
- iii $(50\% \text{ of } \square) + (7.5 + \diamond) = \bullet$
- iv $45\% \text{ of } (4/3 \text{ of } \bullet) = \blacksquare$
- v $(\blacksquare \times \square) - (\bullet \times 6) - \square = \blacklozenge$

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
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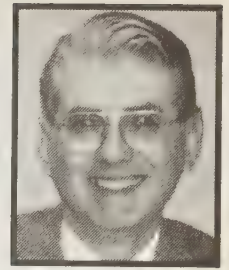


ArithmeCode answer from last issue: JOY

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019



Spiritual Abuse

Recently, a minister wrote an article in the *Record* in which he complained about congregations “terrorizing” their ministers. Is it not usually the other way around?

There is no question, ministers sometimes fall victim to disaffected and angry members of the congregations they serve. Conflicts arise over the silliest things, such as the day the minister suggested the old piano be scrapped and replaced with a new one. Little did he know someone had donated that piano to the church many decades earlier, and the grandchildren weren't about to have this reminder of their beloved ancestor trashed. They took it as a personal affront. What should have been a minor irritant became the vehicle for the expression of many other grievances suddenly discovered. The conflict became destructive. The minister did not know what hit him. It all resulted in a presbytery investigation during which it became clear to the minister that his position in the congregation had become untenable and he looked for a call elsewhere. Many similar stories could be told.

Yet, during my 35 years as a minister, I have noticed that unproductive and destructive conflict more often arises be-

cause members of a congregation finally rise up against clergy who are “control freaks” and who spiritually abuse the membership. I have a considerable number of letters on file from people in the pew who feel helpless against powerful and domineering clergy who rule congregations virtually single-handedly. They manipulate sessions, boards of managers, congregations and, often, even presbyteries as well.

There seems to be a disturbing trend among some clergy to see themselves as entitled to an authority that far exceeds that of the gospel mandate. Instead of seeing themselves as standing with the people of God in common service to our Lord, they place themselves over against them and regard any difference of opinion expressed to them as a personal slight. In order to meet their own needs for importance, power, intimacy or spiritual gratification, they use their spiritual authority to control and dominate others.

I believe every minister and elder, or anyone else in leadership positions, should read *The Subtle Power of Spiritual Abuse* by David Johnson and Jeff VanVonderen (1991, Bethany House). The cover notes: “Through the subtle use of the right ‘spiritual’ words, church

members are manipulated or shamed into certain behaviours or performances that ensnare them in legalism, guilt and begrudging service. This is *spiritual* abuse, and the results can be shattering. Deeply ingrained spiritual codes of written and unwritten rules control and condemn, wounding believers’ spirits and keeping them from the grace and joy of God’s kingdom. Believers find themselves enslaved to a system, a leader, a standard of performance that saps true spiritual life.”

This book is an eye-opener. Even those who honestly believe they have never spiritually abused their congregations receive a wake-up call. Few ministers, elders or anyone else who has given leadership in a congregation can come away from reading this book not asking the Lord’s forgiveness for having, at one time or another, used spiritually abusive attitudes or methods. As the authors note, even “healthy leaders and spiritual systems can sometimes, unintentionally, treat people in hurtful ways.”

Yes, power-hungry cliques in congregations do, on occasion, “terrorize” their ministers. Unfortunately, the reverse is also true. What a far cry from the “mind of Christ,” the One who came not to be served but to serve.

When did the Presbyterian Church first use the burning bush as its emblem?

The story of the burning bush is found in Exodus 3:2-4 where Moses has his fiery encounter with the God who calls him to lead the people of Israel out of slavery into freedom. When Moses asks for God’s name, God answers, “I AM WHO I AM.” Moses is to tell the Israelites and the Pharaoh, “‘I AM’ has sent me ...” This is the eternal God who has no beginning or ending.

The words of the late Louis Fowler, former clerk of Assembly, may be helpful: “The burning bush ... with the motto ‘*nec tamen consumebatur*’ (‘yet it was not consumed’) is used as an unofficial seal by our church, and some other Presbyterian churches. This is an old usage, and a witness to the Divine Life within and to the fires through which we have gone. The burning bush is found on cornerstones, as a wall decoration within the church, as a carving on a pulpit, chair, or panelling. The commonest use is on a pulpit fall ...” (*A Manual for Ruling Elders*).

According to John S. Moir, in his *A Handbook for Canadian Presbyterians*, the burning bush was used in Scotland “since the early Reformation period as symbolic of the Church’s eternity, but never officially adopted by Scottish or Canadian Presbyterianism as its logo.”

That’s about the best I can do! **R**

Please send questions for Rev. Tony Plomp to e-mail: TONY_PLOMP@bc.sympatico.ca or 4020 Lancelot Dr., Richmond, B.C. V7C 4S3. Include your name and address for information.



Colour It True

A friend and I got into a discussion about race relations the other day. Coming from the United States, inner-city America, he's aware of race issues. Moreover, he's in sociology and is socially active, so race awareness and racial discrimination are hot topics in any conversation with him.

I told him I didn't think race is as big a problem in Canada as in the United States. While multiculturalism is definitely an issue, it doesn't seem to be as pressing a subject.

He didn't believe me.

I modified my position slightly. Racism certainly exists in Canada, I said, and is a problem; but I didn't think there was the social or economic discrepancy based on race that there is in the United States. I said I thought people classified other people based more on culture or language than on race.

For example, while I don't like this part of myself, if I saw someone wearing a sari or spoke with someone who didn't speak English well, I might make assumptions whatever colour his or her skin happened to be. I wouldn't make the same assumptions about someone wearing jeans and a T-shirt who spoke English perfectly. (Of course, cultural issues tend to fall in line with racial issues, and they're arguably as big a problem; but they're not quite the same thing.)

"Come on," my friend said, "you can't tell me that when you first met me you didn't notice first that I am brown."

My friend is what I would describe as "all-American" in the best sense of the term. He is clean-cut, good-looking, sincere and open. He wears jeans and a button-down shirt, usually with loafers or running shoes and a leather jacket. Ethnically, he's South Asian; but, in the little pigeon-holes I have in my head (again, not something I particularly like

about myself but something that is hard to avoid doing), I classed him with all the other hearty, clean-cut Americans.

"Actually," I told him, "the first thing I thought about you was 'all-American' — the kind of guy a mother would like her daughter to bring home."

He looked at me. "I don't believe you," he said.

There wasn't much to say to that. He still doesn't believe me, even though we argued about it for a while longer. (It's like the tautologies some feminists use — if we disagree with them, we've obviously been brainwashed by the male patriarchal system.) If I said I didn't instantly classify my friend as "brown" or "Indian," I was either fooling myself or lying. Not classifying him on the basis of race or skin colour was not an

option. And there is no way to argue with such a world-view or convince someone otherwise. It was, literally, too good to be true.

It's difficult to think outside of our own heads — to assimilate something that simply "does not compute," that does not mesh with our world-views or assumptions about how the world works. People who can rethink their entire framework of existence are explosive or revolutionary. The disciples and early Christians were that kind of people; so were Luther and Calvin and their first followers.

Imagine. You have been told all your life that following the law matters, that doing good works and performing the rituals of the church will earn you access to heaven. This is what you believe; this is

what structures all your actions and your assumptions. Suddenly, someone comes along and says, no, you've got it wrong. God loves you no matter what you do, no matter who you are. All you have to do is believe it, accept it. Even if you are the worst sinner alive, God loves you. You could make a horrible mess of your life,

break every trust, spend every penny of your father's hard-earned inheritance on selfish, unhealthy things — he would still hike up his robes and come running with open arms. God's love is absolutely unconditional.

Nope. Sorry, God, I just don't believe it. It's too good to be true.

What answer is there to that? If we don't want to believe it, God cannot convince us of his love any more than I could convince my friend I didn't think of

him as "brown." And, yet, it's true.

That's what faith is: believing something that goes completely against all your experience, against all your understanding of the world, simply because someone you trust tells you it is true. Faith is accepting the person's word for it because no rational proof would be convincing enough.

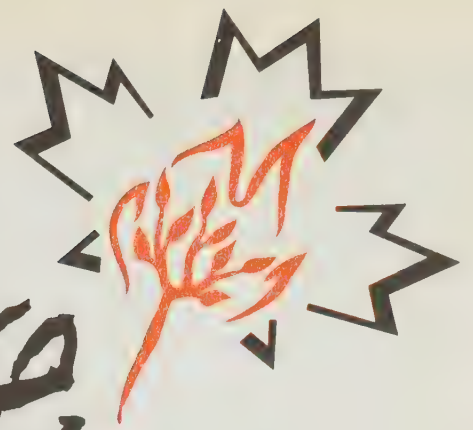
If we do manage to believe it, to change our world-view completely on the basis of that belief — well, that's when revolution happens. **[E]**

People who can rethink their entire framework of existence are revolutionary; the disciples and early Christians were that kind of people

Kathy Cawsey, a member of Knox Church, Waterloo, Ont., is studying at Oxford University. Write to Kathy at: Middle Common Room, Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, England OX2 6QA; by e-mail at kathleen.cawsey@lmh.ox.ac.uk.

The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Millennium / 125th / Jubilee



Celebrate.

Canada's Christians Connect in Hope

The two broadest umbrella organizations of Christian churches in Canada have decided to do something together about welcoming the year 2000 as the anniversary of Jesus Christ's birth. As a first step, the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC) and the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC) are sponsoring a project they call *Together 2000: Christians in Canada Honouring Jesus*. A joint working group plans to publicize and encourage initiatives that will help Christians enter the new millennium with renewed hope grounded in the gospel of Jesus.

A number of ecumenical initiatives are already under way. The Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative is part of an international campaign to cancel the crushing debt burden of poorer countries. An international March for Jesus will, in 1999, gather people in 178 countries around the theme of reconciliation. It will culminate in a global "Jesus Day" on June 10, 2000. The new joint working group hopes to encourage Christians all over Canada to reach across boundaries, take whatever they need from resources already offered, and plan ways of preparing for a new moment in their Christian journey.

Gary Walsh, EFC president, co-chairs *Together 2000* with Janet Somerville, CCC's general secretary. The two groups represent 50 denominations constituting most of Canada's Christian population.

Don Posterski, vice-president of World Vision Canada, is convinced the time is right for a shared Christian expression that would be "ecumenical in spirit, evangelical in passion, pentecostal in enthusiasm, catholic and inclusive in scope, and respectful and neighbourly towards everyone. If we don't speak at this milestone in the Christian journey through history," Posterski says, "we can't complain if no one hears anything except what the secular pundits say on television. And that would be a great pity."

The co-chairs admit nothing stays simple. But they also report the shared effort is exhilarating. "I can't walk away from this," says Gary Walsh. "No evangelical can be against an effort to honour Jesus. And if God makes this grow, this can be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for a coast-to-coast celebration of faith." The CCC's Somerville adds:

"It's not easy to find the way. But just being together to try is already a taste of hope. I'm eager to see what comes next."

Millennial Fund Campaign

In support of the General Assembly's FLAMES initiative (the first year to focus on Mission), St. Giles Kingsway Church in Etobicoke, Ontario, has adopted "Forward in Mission" as its slogan for the year 1999-2000. The congregation's Millennial Fund Campaign hopes to raise \$100,000 for mission. Sixty thousand dollars will be invested in local mission by extending the seating capacity of the sanctuary and creating two new rooms for youth ministry. Twenty thousand dollars will be invested in national mission through the ministries of Flora House and Anishinabe Fellowship in Winnipeg. And \$20,000 will be used for international mission in the ministry of the Presbyterian Church in Guyana.

The year 2000 will be a multi-celebration for St. Giles Kingsway — the 2000th anniversary of the birth of Jesus Christ, the 125th anniversary of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and the 50th anniversary of St. Giles Kingsway.

The Bartimaeus Trail

Betty Dee Black has designed her millennium celebration. On May 16, with her grandson Adam Mitchell McNally and friend Victor Fast, she will leave Sarnia, Ontario, on a 110-day walk to the Yukon. It will be a fund-raising and awareness walk in support of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind.

She plans to cover 65 kilometres a day accompanied by her 26-year-old parrot mascot, Sam. Betty is calling her walk the Bartimaeus Trail and will ask people she meets. "Who is Bartimaeus?" She hopes to visit schools and churches along her route and encourage others to join her for a day or two.

Betty is a member of St. Andrew's Church in Sarnia. You can contact her for more information through the church at 261 Christina St. N., Sarnia, Ont. N7T 5V4. **R**



Betty Dee Black (centre) with grandson Adam McNally (left) and friend Victor Fast.

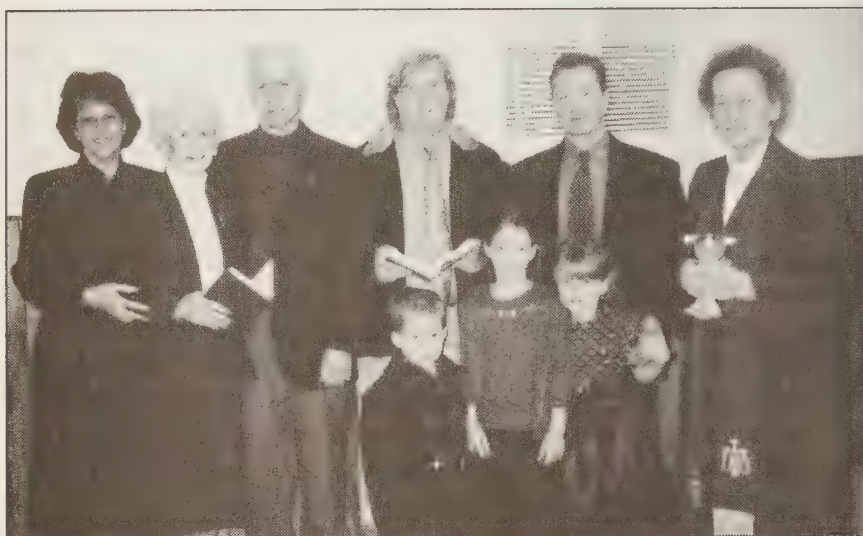
Let us know what your group is planning. We would like to include it in a future column.

PEOPLE & PLACES



▲ FIRST CHURCH, PICTOU, N.S., held a Scottish Heritage Service last fall as part of Pictou's "Hector 225" celebrations, marking the 225th anniversary of the arrival in Pictou Harbour of Scottish immigrants on the ship *Hector*. The Kilted Choir of St. Andrew's Church, Dartmouth, N.S., sang at the service.

STANDING IN FRONT of the latest work by the banner group of West Shore Church, Victoria, is Ria van Netten, the creative force behind the banner. Ria has been studying a ▼ new technique that was used in making the banner.



▲ LARGE-PRINT HYMN-BOOKS, given in memory of George and Helen Billing, and Calvin Thorn, were dedicated at Riverside Church, Windsor, Ont. A Communion chalice and plate, given by Bob and Peggy Billinghamurst, were also dedicated. Therese, Aline and Bruce Thorn are pictured (left) with Peter and John Billing, children Noah, Georgia and Camille, and Rev. Rosemary Doran.

Haney Church, Maple Ridge, B.C., has begun an outreach ministry for single parents. A monthly complimentary dinner meeting is held for the parents and children, with a program that includes such things as nutritional cooking on a tight budget, young child discipline, financial management and the meaning of Christmas. Child care is provided during the presentations. Eight parents and seven children are currently part of the group. The outreach program is assisted by a grant from the Experimental Fund of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

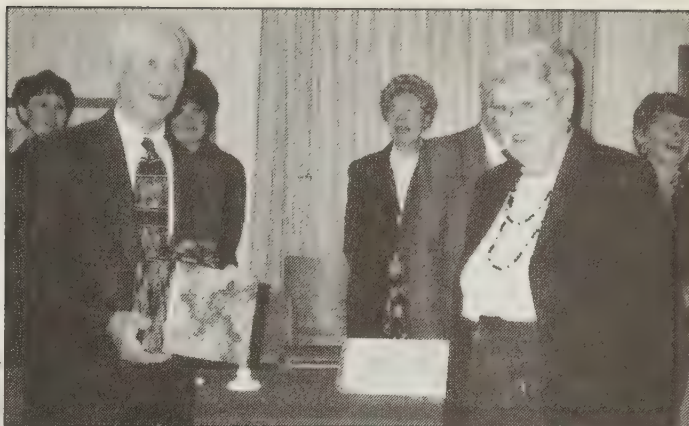
THE MODERATOR ▼ of the 124th General Assembly, William Klempa, returned to the scene of his student days when he visited Beaverton Church, Beaverton, Ont. He is shown (left) with Rev. Byron Grace and members of the Beaverton session.



Please note: Photos submitted for People & Places must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope if they are to be returned. Also, please try to ensure all pictures are clear and do not include a multitude of people. Colour or black-and-white photos are acceptable, but negatives and slides cannot be used. Thank you.

PEOPLE & PLACES

A RECEPTION TO RECOGNIZE the 138 years of combined service on the part of seven retiring elders (Jim Dewar, Don Hamilton, John McMillan, Bev Nichol, Jean Peebles, Mary Vallance, Marjory Young), the church auditor (Elwood Hanna) and the treasurer (Margaret Peebles) was held at Atwood Church, Atwood, Ont. During the reception, elder Jack Ballantyne presented a gift on behalf of the congregation to Margaret Peebles, who retired after 28 years as treasurer.



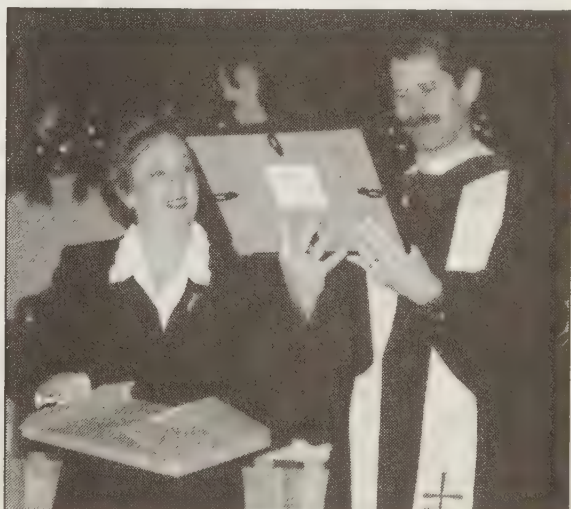
THE CHOIR OF Braeside Church, St. Albert, Alta., was joined by members of a neighbouring Lutheran church choir in a benefit concert for the OSVITA medical project in the Ukraine. The \$1,500 raised will pay most of the cost of two ultrasound machines for a Ukrainian hospital.

THE CONGREGATION OF St. Andrew's Church, Allenford, Ont., opened its library to the public on November 7 as a Christian circulating library. The library, named Andy's Reading Room, is open 10 hours a week and staffed by volunteers. Taking part in the ribbon-cutting ceremony were (L to R): Rev. Janice Hamalainen; Florence Cox, senior member of St. Andrew's; Yvonne Harron, reeve of Amabel Township; and Bernice Gowan, elder and library organizer.



INSPIRED BY AN ARTICLE on banners in the *Presbyterian Record*, the church school children of Caven Church, Bolton, Ont., made two banners. One read "All things bright and beautiful come from God alone" and the other read "Rejoice!" The banners were dedicated and displayed in the sanctuary as a celebration of the children's ministry in the congregation.

THE CONGREGATION OF Calvin Church, North Bay, Ont., held a special service and farewell luncheon for Rev. Martin J. Molengraaf and his family. Marty, as he is affectionately known, served as minister of Calvin for 5 1/2 years. He and his wife, Barb, are seen accepting gifts presented by clerk of session Binnie Armstrong.

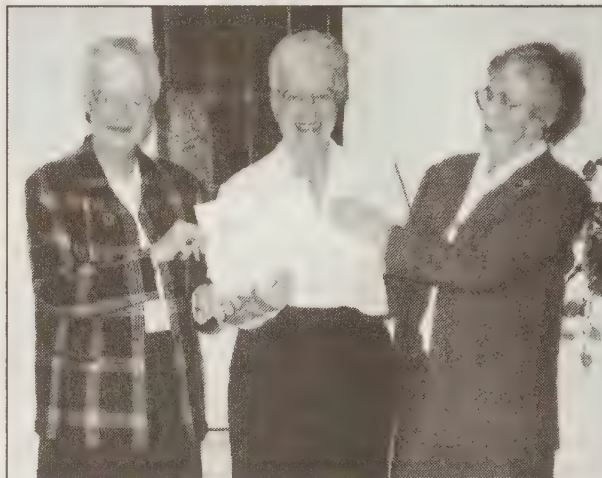


PEOPLE & PLACES

THE SESSION OF St. Stephen's Church, Scarborough, Ont., recognized elders Colin Craig and Dave Russell with the title of elder emeritus. Rev. Gerard Bylaard and clerk of session John Jenkinson are pictured with Colin and Molly Craig and Dave and Inez Russell.



THE BIG 4-0 was a cause for celebration when the congregation of MacNab Street Church, Hamilton, Ont., joined their minister, Rev. Mark Lewis, in celebrating his 40th birthday.



JEAN DANCEY, a member of the Lawrie Cormack WMS of Knox Church, Oshawa, Ont., and of the WMS Council Executive, received her honorary life membership certificate and pin recently. The pin belonged to her mother, who received it in 1924. Jean's sisters, Kay Pentland (left) of Windsor, Ont., and Mary MacInnis (right) of Kingston, Ont., were on hand to present the pin and certificate in memory of their parents.

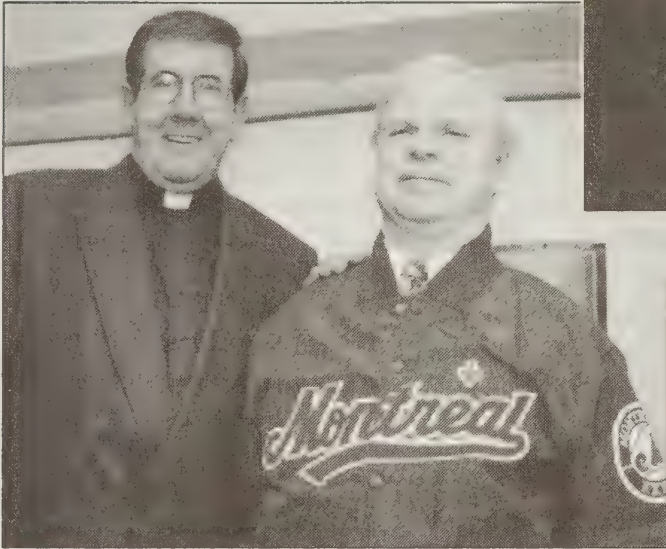
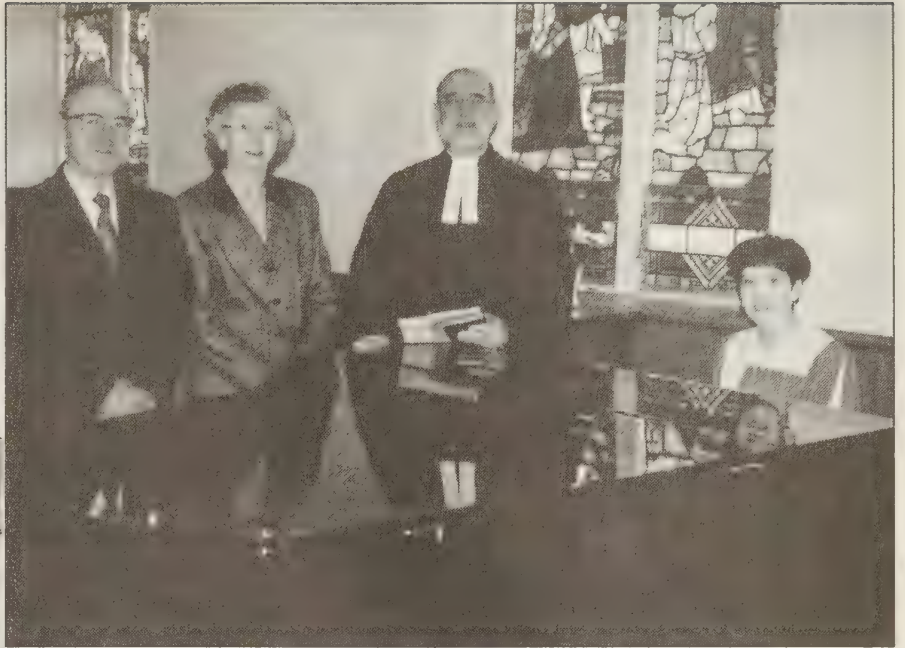
THE ELSIE HENDERSON Evening Auxiliary of Kirkwall Church, Kirkwall, Ont., donated a cheque for \$500 to Presbyterian World Service and Development at the group's annual Thankoffering Service for use in Central America. Norma Reeve, auxiliary secretary, presents the cheque to Rev. Joe Reed, missionary to Central America and guest speaker.



PICTURED ARE THE members of one of three Bible study groups sponsored by the mission group of St. Andrew's Church, Ajax, Ont. Back row (from left): Norma Telfer, Paddy Blake, Arlene Boteju, Nancy Palkowski, Sandra Palkowski, Sylvia Savage and Vera Garrett. Front row: Agnes Conkey, Anne Johannisee, Dorothy Brown and Alva MacFarlane.

PEOPLE & PLACES

A GRAND PIANO was dedicated in memory of Mia Van Beek at St. Andrew's Church, Ancaster, Ont. Mia was a principal fund raiser for the instrument and had a significant musical ministry at St. Andrew's. Gathered around the piano are: her husband, Lex Van Beek; Doris Thompson, convener of the worship committee; Rev. Ron Archer; Susan Plewes, director of music.



CHAPLAIN OF THE MONTREAL EXPOS Bob Presseau was the guest speaker at the Scouts/Guides Thinking Day celebrations at Beaverton Church, Beaverton, Ont. Shown with him is Rev. Barney Grace.



UNION CHURCH, MIRA FERRY, N.S., ordained its first women elders last year. Sharon MacEachern (left) and Flora Gardiner prepare to cut a cake provided by the Presbyterian Christian Women Friendship Guild at a fellowship gathering following the service.

A COMMUNION RUNNER, pulpit fall and book-marker were dedicated in memory of Clara Burditt at Alberton Church, Alberton, Ont. Taking part in the dedication were (L to R): Helen Billiald, daughter of Clara; Jean Morwick; Rev. Walter Read; Wilma Butter, clerk of session.



MORE THAN 120 MEMBERS and friends attended the first Feast of St. Andrew Ceilidh at Knox Church, Yorkton, Sask. After the haggis ceremony, a traditional Scottish dinner was served, followed by a program of Scottish songs, poems, piping, Highland and Scottish dancing, and a skit. Alison Currie and her grandfather, Peter Brae, are ready to welcome guests.



Tofu Mania by Brita Housez (Centax, 1998, \$12.95). Reviewed by John Congram.

When this book arrived at the *Record* office, it immediately caught my attention. Two years ago, when my wife first began her battle with breast cancer, I was introduced to the wonderful world of tofu by the nutritionist at Sunnybrook Hospital in Toronto. I have nothing against soybeans from which tofu is made. My brother-in-law does well growing them as a cash crop. It's just that I would sooner not have to eat them, even in this most popular form known as tofu.

This book promised to make eating tofu both fun and enjoyable. I could not resist finding out for myself if the claims were true. Some of the recipes actually had familiar names such as French toast and rhubarb strawberry pie.

In case you haven't heard, according to scientific studies, tofu can prevent or fight a number of cancers, heart disease, strokes, osteoporosis and kidney disease. It is inexpensive, high in protein, low in calories, free of cholesterol, low in fat and rich in vitamins, iron and calcium. Although made from fermented soybeans, it does not produce the usual side effects of beans. The perfect food, you say. Then why aren't people fighting each other to buy it at the local grocery store?

Quite frankly, it doesn't taste good. Actually, it doesn't have much taste at all, and that is one of its virtues as it easily takes on the taste of your favourite foods.

So our family launched ourselves on a journey of eating and taking turns making the recipes from *Tofu Mania*. I made Almond Chicken with Snow Peas and

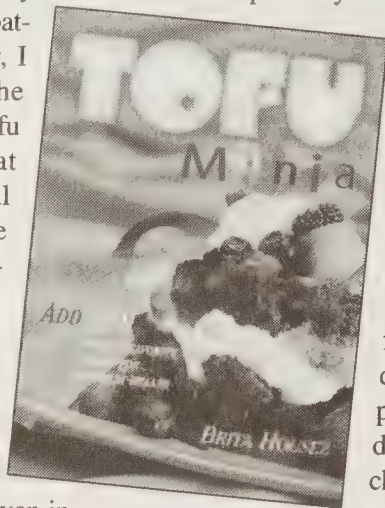
Apricots. Delicious. Would have been better if I had heeded my wife's comment: "Shouldn't you make some rice to pour this stuff over?" This recipe is now the easiest one to find in our book. It's the one with the stains and pressed snow pea. My son made Grilled Quesadillas, and Greek Pasta with Beans, Tomatoes and Feta. I loved them both. The best part, we were getting our required amount of tofu with no pain. You only need two ounces or 60 grams per day.

This book has suggestions for breakfasts, lunches and dinners as well as drinks, appetizers, dips, salads and desserts. Yes, you can now eat chocolate brownies or cheesecake and feel good about it.

This book disproves the old adage that you can't have your cake and eat it too. Along with the tofu, the author has incorporated other healthy features into her recipes such as reducing fat and introducing whole grains. And, for the fastidious, each recipe includes a nutritional analysis.

One question remains, How did a recipe book come to be reviewed in a theological publication? Wasn't it St. Paul who said that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit? Besides, Brita Housez is a good Presbyterian. Maybe, most important of all, the book is a wonderful deal at \$12.95 from the author or Book Room, or even cheaper for groups who wish to sell it and make some money for their own projects. Brita is prepared to offer generous discounts to church groups for fund-raising (contact her at 1-905-934-2459).

The author says her goal is "to 'demystify' tofu and help you make it an everyday, healthy ingredient in your daily cooking." I haven't quite arrived there yet, but this book gave me a healthy push along the right path.



Listening for the Heartbeat of God: A Celtic Spirituality by J. Philip Newell (Paulist, 1998, \$14.75). Reviewed by Ken Craigie.

J. Philip Newell is warden of spirituality for the Anglican diocese of Portsmouth, England. A Church of Scotland minister, he has served at St. Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh, and as warden of Iona Abbey. Born in Chatham, Ontario, and raised in Oshawa and Toronto, he was educated at McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, and the University of Edinburgh (BD and PhD). Though licensed by the Presbytery of Edinburgh, he was ordained by the Presbytery of Hamilton to be the chaplain at McMaster University, where he served from 1982 to 1988. His other books include *The Iona Community Worship Book*, *An Earthful of Glory*, *Celtic Prayers From Iona* and *The Book of Creation: The Practice of Celtic Spirituality*.

This is a helpful book for those who wish to know the answer to, What does Celtic spirituality offer the modern Christian? Newell traces the roots of this tradition to St. John the Evangelist and his contemplative approach as the one "who listened for the heartbeat of God." He reviews the historical data in a readable, economical manner and effectively links the struggles of the Celts and the Romans to the philosophers and authors of British novels whom he recognizes as part of the lineage in this long and arduous historical movement. He tries to restore the essence of Pelagian thought to the theological superscript it deserves. Saints such as Ninian, Patrick, Bridgit, Columba and Brendan are referenced.

The substance of the Celtic tradition is effectively described in contrast to the Roman tradition of St. Peter. The St. John tradition, Newell explains, "with its emphasis on the Light that enlightens every person coming into the world, had inspired the Celtic mission to believe, like Pelagius, in the essential goodness

of humanity." Their "vision of God as the Life of the world had led this mission to look for the grace of God within as well as beyond creation." The writings of Scottish philosopher John Scotus Eriugena, the 19th-century publications of the *Carmina Gadelica* by Alexander Carmichael (a vast collection of prayers, songs and chants from the oral tradition of the Celts), and the fictional works of George MacDonald and Alexander John Scott provide Newell with a river of intellectual history that connects with George MacLeod and the modern version of the Iona Community. This book does not argue that the St. John tradition of the Celts and the Eastern Orthodox Church is superior to the Roman tradition of St. Peter. Rather, both hold important insights and mysteries for the believer to ponder and, indeed, both help us to walk the pilgrim's journey of faith.

Kenneth R. Craigie is an elder at Rosedale Church, Toronto, and a past chair of the board of trustees of the Toronto School of Theology.

Celtic Christianity: A Sacred Tradition, A Vision of Hope by Timothy Joyce (*Orbis*, 1998, \$23.25). Reviewed by Wayne A. Holst.

In a market flooded with books on Celtic spirituality, it is wise to be discriminating about a subject that can let the spirit soar or stumble on the shoals of nonsense. Timothy Joyce's book is of the soaring variety. He locates Celtic spirituality in its historical context, showing how it evolved and changed over 3,000 years. He offers a vision for its future.

The author writes as an Irish American, a Roman Catholic and a Benedictine monk. Raised in a church strongly influenced by pre-Vatican II, Roman-based Catholicism, he became aware of his Irishness and the character of a Celtic church which was different than what he had been taught. Attempting to connect with a lost spiritual heritage, he subsequently made eight pilgrimages to Ireland and one to Scotland.

Joyce believes a revitalized Celtic Christianity has the potential to break

down barriers that have shackled the church since its early history. This ancient Christian world-view predates a church division of a millennium and a half between Celtic and Roman Catholicism, the split between the Eastern and Western churches of a thousand years ago, and the Protestant Reformation which tore apart Western Christendom in the 16th century. Celtic Christianity is not so much a traditional, mental concept as a lived reality with shared surviving expressions rooted in the soil of Ireland, Scotland, Wales, parts of England and the New Breton regions of Nova Scotia.

Underlying themes, movements and characteristics identify the Celtic personality of past and present. Celts are a verbal people with an oral culture. They have an imaginative way of seeing, hearing, touching and feeling reality. They organize socially and locally in loosely connected clans and tribes. They possess great respect for heroes and warriors (which evolves into a strong love of saints). They tend to embrace opposites, claiming a both/and stance and avoiding an either/or approach. They possess a mystical bent, assuming not so much a romantic view of creation as a healthy respect for it, recognizing its dark side. Celts like to wander and to explore.

This book traces the history of Celtic spirituality from its pre-Christian roots through the period of the Celtic church, the conflict and gradual shift toward a Roman brand of Catholicism (after Whitby, AD 664), monasticism, developments in doctrine and practice, decline and darkest hours caused by the Cromwellian colonization and penal laws enacted by the British beginning in the 17th century, the great famines of the mid-19th century and the devastating results this had on the Celtic psyche.

Rather than proclaiming its demise, Joyce believes a contemporary Celtic vision is emerging in response to the spiritual needs of moderns who are awash in materialism, secularism and consumerism. He is convinced Celtic spiritual values can effect the renewal of local church communities and individual Christians within them. This spirituality

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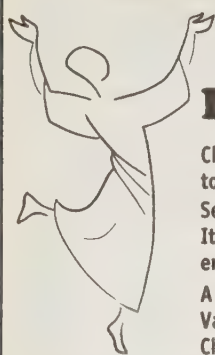
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provides a richer way of experiencing God. Indeed, it is too valuable to remain the private preserve of those with Celtic background. It is a gift for all humanity.

Wayne A. Holst is a lecturer at the University of Calgary. He was a Lutheran pastor, missionary and church executive for 25 years. His current work focuses on the comparative spirituality of indigenous peoples and cross-cultural awareness.

Preaching That Matters: The Bible and Our Lives by Stephen Farris
(Westminster John Knox, 1998, \$27).
Reviewed by John Congram.

We don't usually review books aimed almost exclusively at the clergy. We make an exception in this case because the author teaches homiletics at Knox College and because laypeople may want to know what good preaching should be like.

Over the past decade, I have heard

Stephen Farris preach on three or four occasions. Always, I came away feeling that this was what preaching is about. In this book, he successfully shares the secrets of effective preaching.

Stephen admits that, at one time, he believed there was no preaching of the gospel without the preacher being tied to a text. He has modified that position realizing that, sometimes, the preacher may draw on a variety of sources to produce a "profoundly biblical though not necessarily profoundly textual sermon." Still, he cautions that to stray from a text can too often lead to "windy expositions of the preacher's own spiritual notions."

A friend of mine recently told of hearing a preacher who showed no evidence of ever having seen, let alone read, a newspaper. Stephen Farris aims to remedy that. He sees the main problem facing the preacher today as bridging the gap between the world of the Bible and people today. The link he proposes is

analogy, which can compare otherwise dissimilar things "so that the unknown, or less known, is clarified by the known."

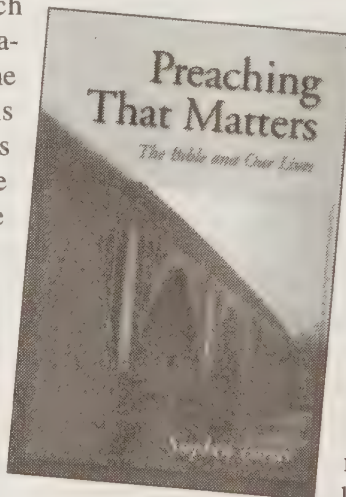
He makes a helpful distinction between sermon and exegetical lecture that, in my experience, preachers often have difficulty making. The latter explains the text intellectually with a view to producing understanding. While a sermon may contain some of this, its main goal is not so much understanding as revelation, an encounter with God.

Although Farris is an advocate of using the lectionary, at least sometimes, he also recognizes its pitfalls. He notes that one of the weaknesses of the Common Lectionary is that it sometimes cuts a passage at an artificial point in order to avoid a difficult or unpleasant part. He suggests preachers might consider the ancient practice of *lectio continua*, preaching week by week through one or more biblical books.

The preacher will find his instructions practical. For example, he provides eight questions the preacher needs to ask about a text before consulting the commentaries. Best of all, he concludes the book with two of his own sermons which illustrate how the theory works.

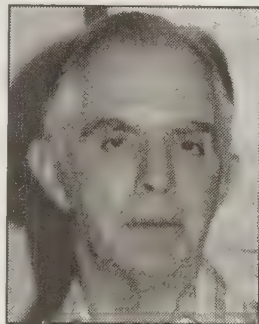
While attending Knox College, we were assigned large portions of Barth's *Dogmatics*. I remember enjoying the footnotes (which often took up a larger portion of the page than the text) more than the text itself. You will find the footnotes in this book, although not as long, enlightening.

May is the month when our three colleges hold their convocations. If you know a graduate to whom you would like to give something but don't know what to give, this book could fill the bill. Your own minister would also welcome a copy.



Most books reviewed may be purchased through The Book Room, 50 Wynford Dr., North York, Ont. M3C 1J7. Do not send payment with order. An invoice will follow. Please include name and location of congregation. Toll-free order line: 1-800-619-7301, ext. 301, e-mail: bookroom@presbyterian.ca.

A Tribute to JAMES BOYD BARBOUR (1913 - 1999)



Glenview session records with deep regret and warm affection the memory of Elder Jim Barbour who died on New Year's Day 1999 at the age of 85. Jim was a dedicated Presbyterian throughout his long life, first in his native England and later in Canada to which he immigrated with his family in 1954. His business career brought him to Winnipeg, then Galt and, finally, Toronto. In each community, he was a willing worker for the Presbyterian Church. In 1966, he left the business world to work for The Presbyterian Church in Canada and, in 1971, was appointed comptroller. He served until his retirement in 1978. After retiring, he served as director of The Presbyterian Church Building Corporation. Jim took a close interest in the corpora-

tion's purposes of financing church expansion and providing affordable accommodation for retired ministers and their widows. He was a respected elder at Glenview Church, Toronto, for a quarter of a century.

Friends and colleagues describe Jim as capable, compassionate, dedicated and conscientious with a quiet sense of humour, always willing to listen and offer help.

DEATHS

ST. DENIS, REV. FREDERIC G. BA, BD, DD, was born in Vancouver in 1903 and received his early education in that city. A graduate of the University of British Columbia, he received his theological training at Westminster Hall (Vancouver) and Princeton Seminary, N.J. His first charge was First Presbyterian Church, Trail, where he served for 11 years. He then moved to Mt. Pleasant Church, Vancouver, for a long pastorate of 43 years. He was clerk of the Synod of British Columbia for several years and moderator in 1938. He received an honorary Doctor of Divinity from Knox College in recognition of his faithful pastoral work. Dr. St. Denis died February 27, 1999, and is survived by his wife, Chris; a brother, Charles; and nieces and nephews. His funeral was from Central Church, Vancouver, conducted by Rev. R. M. Pollock and Rev. Paul Myers.

BARR, GEORGE, 82, member and former trustee, St. James Presbyterian Church, Chatham, Ont., Nov. 9, 1998.

CAMPBELL, JEAN, 90, member, Willowdale Presbyterian Church, North York, Ont., Oct. 1, 1998.

CHASSAGNE, ALICE, 51, member of St. Andrew's, St. Lambert, Que.; formerly associated with Église Presbytérienne St. Luc, Montreal, Feb. 28, 1999.

COMPTON, LORNA, 75, member, Willowdale Presbyterian Church, North York, Ont., Oct. 8, 1998.

GRAY, HELEN, 91, member, Willowdale Presbyterian Church, North York, Ont., May 25, 1998.

HAMILTON, MARGARET, died suddenly March 8, 1999, in Etobicoke General Hospital. Former member of Knox and St. Paul's congregations (Oshawa, Ont.) where she was active in Sunday school and WMS work. Since 1956 was member of St. Andrew's and Rexdale congregations (Etobicoke, Ont.). Very sadly missed by her husband, Roy, and daughters Jean Kift, Oshawa, and Mary Jane Govan, Sidney, B.C.

HASLETT, MARGARET, died Jan. 22, 1999. Margaret was an active member and elder at St. George's Church, London, Ont.

MORLEY, JOHN B., 77, longtime member of St. Paul's, Bramalea, Ont., Feb. 15. John served the congregation as a member of the choir until his demise, was a former member of the board, elder and clerk of session. He was a former leader in the Scouts and, in more recent years, was a volunteer and director of the Brampton Meals on Wheels.

PIPER, EILEEN, 92, member, Willowdale Presbyterian Church, North York, Ont., Dec. 28, 1998.

RAMSEY, GEORGE W., 94, longtime member and faithful elder of St. Peter's Presbyterian Church, Neil's Harbour, N.S., March 15; served as representative elder in Cape Breton Presbytery.

RANKIN, GEORGE, 72, active, faithful member, former clerk of session, Union, Terra Cotta, Ont., and St. Andrew's, Port Credit,

Ont.; served on Knox College Senate; died peacefully at home on Monday, Dec. 28, 1998.

RIDSDALE, OLIVER, C., of Cambridge, Ont., died peacefully at the age of 77 at Hamilton General Hospital on Feb. 5, 1999, with his family at his side. A lifelong member of St. Andrew's Galt Presbyterian Church, Cambridge, he was a dedicated elder, serving both his church and community in many ways. Oliver will be missed by all who knew him.

SMITH, JEAN CRAIG, died Feb. 26, 1999.

Jean was a longtime member of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and a dedicated elder at St. George's Presbyterian Church, London, Ont. She was predeceased by her husband, Rev. D. Crawford Smith.

THOMSON, WILLIAM S., on March 8, 1999. Born Lanarkshire, Scotland, May 9, 1914.

Elder and former convener of the board and longtime choir member, Knox Presbyterian Church, Oakville, Ont. Former member of the Armed Forces Chaplaincy Committee; past convener, Board of World Mission, Presbytery of Brampton; vice-chairman, Confederation of Church and Business People. Served on several committees of General Assembly, Presbyterian Church in Canada.

WEBB, LOIS, 80, member, Willowdale Presbyterian Church, North York, Ont., Oct. 30, 1998.

WILSON, ROBERT JAMES, a member of St. Timothy's (Ottawa), died suddenly on Feb. 26, 1999. Ordained an elder in Stanley Church (Montreal) over 47 years ago, Robert Wilson was committed to the church and community, remaining an active member of session and representing the Presbyterian Church on the Church Council on Social Justice and Corrections.

ORDINATIONS and INDUCTIONS

Martin, Rev. Linda J., St. Paul's/Tomstown, Englehart, Ont., March 17.

Smith, Rev. Jeffrey, St. John's, Kapuskasing, Ont., Dec. 6.

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Synod of the Atlantic Provinces

Halifax, Church of St. David. Rev. P.A. McDonald, 4 Pinehill Rd., Dartmouth, N.S. B3A 2E6.

The Transitions column welcomes announcements of special events such as births, marriages, anniversaries, baptisms and the reception of new members, as well as death notices. The rate is 90 cents per word or \$43 per column inch (the lower amount) plus GST.

All notices of pulpit vacancies, recognitions, ordinations and inductions will be charged to presbyteries: \$10 for the basic notice and 90 cents per word for additional information. (There will be no charge to congregations on the Every Home or Club 50 plans.)

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 Miramichi, N.B., St. James. Rev. Mel Fawcett, 395 Murray Ave., Bathurst, N.B. E2A 1T4.
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 New Glasgow, N.S., Westminster. Rev. Glenn Cooper, Box 1078, Westville, N.S. B0K 2A0.
 River John, N.S., St. George's; Toney River, St. David's. Rev. Kenneth MacLeod, Box 185, New Glasgow, N.S. B2H 5E2.
 St. John's, Nfld., St. Andrew's. Rev. John C. Duff, PO Box 6206, Stn. C, St. John's, Nfld. A1C 6J9.
 St. John's, Nfld., St. David's (effective June 30). Rev. Ian S. Wishart, 5 Chestnut Place, St. John's, Nfld. A1B 2T1.
 Springhill, N.S., St. David's; Oxford, St. James; Riverview, St. Andrew's. Rev. Mark McLennan, RR 2, Scotsburn, N.S. B0K 1R0.
 Summerside, P.E.I., Summerside Church. Rev. Christine Schulze, Box 32, Tyne Valley, P.E.I. C0B 2C0.

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 Dunvegan, Ont., Kenyon; Kirk Hill, St. Columba. Rev. Edward O'Neill, Box 7, Maxville, Ont. K0C 1T0.
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 Ingleside, Ont., St. Matthew's (part-time). Rev. Ian MacMillan, 18220 S. Branch Rd., Cornwall, Ont. K6H 5R6.
 Montreal, Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul. Rev. J.C. McLelland, 121 Alston Rd., Pointe-Claire, Que. H9R 3E2.
 Montreal, Knox Crescent Kensington and First. Rev. Richard Topping, 3415 Redpath St., Montreal, Que. H3G 2G2.
 Montreal, Korean. Rev. John Kim, 298 Rudar Rd., Mississauga, Ont. L5A 1S3.
 Montreal, Maisonneuve-St. Cuthbert's. Rev. Coralie Jackson-Bissonnette, 5545 Snowdon Ave., Montreal, Que. H3X 1Y8.

Synod of Toronto and Kingston

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Keele St., Box 5097, Maple, Ont. L6A 1R6.
 Brampton, St. Andrew's. Rev. Peter Barrow, 38 Edith St., Georgetown, Ont. L7G 3B1.
 Burk's Falls, St. Andrew's; Magnetawan, Knox; Sundridge, Knox (1.5 ministers). Rev. Job van Hartingsveldt, Box 650, Burk's Falls, Ont. P0A 1C0.
 Cambridge, Knox's Galt. Rev. Kevin Livingston, St. Andrew's Hespeler Church, 73 Queen St. E, Cambridge, Ont. N3C 2A9.
 Claude, Claude Church. Rev. Gerald Rennie, 67 Churchill Rd. N, Acton, Ont. L7J 2H9.
 Collingwood, First (two ministers). Rev. James Kitson, 539 Hugel Ave., Midland, Ont. L4R 1W1.
 Guelph, Knox (June 30). Rev. Linda Bell, 2 Cross St., Elmira, Ont. N3B 2S5.
 Hastings, St. Andrew's; Warkworth, St. Andrew's. Rev. Roger Millar, Box 327, Norwood, Ont. K0L 2V0.
 Hillsdale, St. Andrew's; Craighurst, Knox (half-time). Rev. Tim Purvis, Box 26, Stayner, Ont. L0M 1S0.
 King City, St. Andrew's. Rev. Daniel D. Scott, 107 Compton Cres., Bradford, Ont. L3Z 2X7.
 Kitchener, Calvin. Rev. Angus Sutherland, Central Presbyterian Church, Queen's Square, Cambridge, Ont. N1S 1H4.
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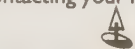
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Toronto, Victoria-Royce. Rev. Jim Cuthbertson, 250 Dunn Ave., Toronto, Ont. M6K 2R9.

Tweed, St. Andrew's. Rev. Chen-Chen Abbott, Box 118, Stirling, Ont. K0K 3E0.

Whitby, St. Andrew's. Rev. Douglas Rollwage, 140 Guildwood Pkwy., Toronto, Ont. M1E 1P4.

Synod of Southwestern Ontario

Ailsa Craig, Ailsa Craig Church. Rev. John Bannerman, 342 Pond Mills Rd., London, Ont. N5Z 3X5; (519) 681-7242.

Blenheim, Blenheim Church (half-time). Rev. Evelyn Carpenter, 60 Fifth St., Chatham, Ont. N7M 4V7.

Burlington, Knox. Rev. David McInnis, 179 Cornwallis Rd., Ancaster, Ont. L9G 4H2.

Crinan, Argyle; Largie, Duff's. Rev. Jennifer Cameron, RR 2, Glencoe, Ont. N0L 1M0.

Dundalk, Erskine; Swinton Park, St. Andrew's. Rev. Pearl Vasarhelyi, General Delivery, Holstein, Ont. N0G 2A0.

Fingall, Knox; Port Stanley, St. John's. Rev. Gloria Langlois, Box 39, Belmont, Ont. N0L 1B0.

Forest, St. James. Rev. Joop Eenkhoorn, 311 Michigan Ave., Point Edward, Ont. N7V 1G1.

Fort Erie, St. Andrew's-Knox. Rev. Donna J. Riseborough, 176 Elm St., Port Colborne, Ont. L3K 4N6.

Glencoe, Glencoe Church; Wardsville, St. John's. Rev. Kathryn Strachan, PO Box 72, Appin, Ont. N0L 1A0.

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Synod of Alberta

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Sooke, Knox. Rev. John F. Allan, 680 Courtney St., Victoria, B.C. V8W 1C1.

Vancouver, Vancouver Korean (bilingual youth minister). Elder S.D. Sohn, 205 West 10th Ave., Vancouver, B.C. V5Y 1R9.

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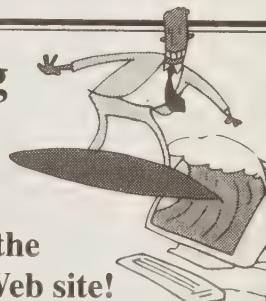
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A Child's Way

A page to share with the children you love

Written by Karen Timbers,
minister of Elmwood Avenue
Church, London, Ont.

Two Sons Are Saved

Scripture Reading: II Kings 4:1-7

(use the *Good News Bible* or the *Contemporary English Version*)

- Read the story and tell it in your own words.
- Fill numerous unbreakable containers with water in your bathtub and pretend you are the two sons in conversation.

Questions to consider

1. What do you think the sons were thinking while they were filling the jars?
2. What does it mean to be a slave?
3. How do you think the woman felt when her sons were freed from possible slavery?



Word Scramble

1. Elisha was a **rphpoet**. (verse 1)
2. The woman's husband had **ided**. (verse 1)
3. The woman owed **ynemo**. (verse 1)
4. The man she owed money to was going to take each of her sons as a **lvesa** in payment. (verse 1)
5. The woman had nothing but **eliov** oil. (verse 2)
6. Elisha told the woman to **orrbow** jars from her neighbours. (verse 3)
7. The small jar of olive oil filled all the jars. When the last one was filled, the oil **stepeod** flowing. (verse 6)
8. Elisha told the woman to **lsel** the oil and pay off her debts. (verse 7)

Word Search

Once you have completed the word scramble, find the unscrambled words in the puzzle. Words may go horizontally, diagonally or vertically. Circle the words and colour in the jug that magically appears.

Prayer

God, you want all people to be free.
No person should own another.
You set the widow's sons free;
help us to release others still held in slavery. Amen.

A note to adults reading this page:

Tragically, children are still taken into slavery in countries such as Sudan, Mauritania and China. Search the Internet for further details or write Elmwood Avenue Presbyterian Church for more information and practical things you can do in the abolition of slavery.

The Promise: Story of a Family

Shelley Prins

I want to tell you a story about a family. Forty-seven years ago, they immigrated to Canada, the land of opportunity. The trip was rough. When a ship goes up and down over the waves, it can be fun for a while. When a ship goes sideways over the waves, it is not fun but one can survive. But when a ship does both of these motions at the same time for a week, the best of people pray for a speedy death.

Forty-seven years ago, with empty stomachs but with great relief, they stepped onto dry ground. For unknown reasons, their clothes and furniture failed to arrive. With no clothes and no money, the land of opportunity became a strange country with a strange language and cold weather.

The mother found work in a hospital kitchen preparing three meals a day. At home, she tried her best to feed five children. She had to be an expert at preparing meals with almost no ingredients.

The father helped a farmer, worked in a factory, delivered the rural mail and, in

his spare time, tried to grow produce for his family. In Holland, he had been an accountant.

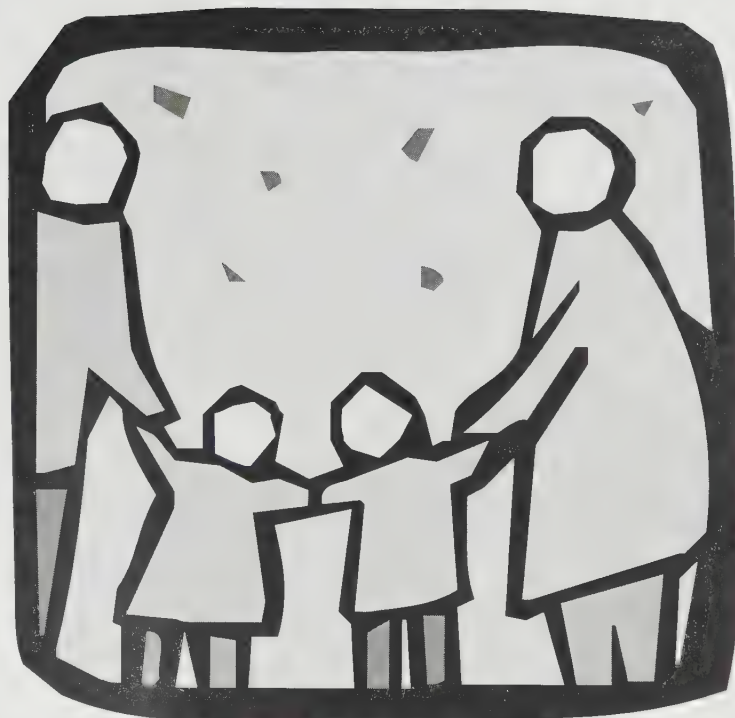
The kids delivered and washed pots in the hospital kitchen. They wasted no time wondering what to wear the next day — there were no choices.

Everyone in the family worked hard at the business of survival. From suffering and struggle came five faithful, active, Christian families who serve others through medicine, teaching and architecture.

For me, God's symbol of the rainbow (Genesis 9:8-17) is all about this. It is a promise, yes, a covenant, that a little woman, who stands on her tiptoes so she can be five feet tall, can faithfully trust

God in adversity, have the courage of her convictions and hold true to the promise that God does not forget his own — ever. **R**

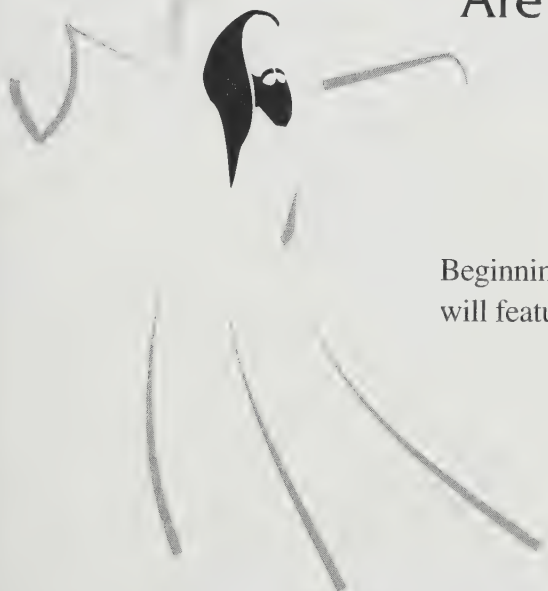
Shelley Prins is an elder and church school superintendent in Knox Church, Iroquois, Ont.



Are you confused about the place of Jesus in a society that often dares not speak his name?

Beginning with Advent 1999 and ending with Pentecost 2000, the *Record* will feature an eight-part series on "Who is Jesus? A Reformed view."

The series will examine what Presbyterians believe about Jesus so that our readers may gain a renewed confidence in the Jesus Christ of the Bible. It will provide an excellent resource for small groups. Each article will have questions for reflection and discussion.



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PRESBYTERIAN Record

June 1999

Fanning the
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p.14



Suggested Biblical Texts for Assembly Personalities

Moderator: "The large crowd listened to him with delight" (Mark 12:37).

Experienced Convener: "No one dared ask him any more questions" (Matthew 22:46).

Assembly Clerk: "What I have written, I have written" (John 19:22).

Record Editor: "He that saw bare record and his record is true" (John 19:35).

Convener about to speak for the first time: "My heart is in anguish within me ... fear and trembling come upon me" (Psalm 55:4).

Readers who later correspond with the Record: "See what large letters I use as I write to you" (Galatians 6:11).

— James A. Simpson (adapted)

"By blood and origin, I am an Albanian. My citizenship is Indian. I am a Catholic nun. As to my calling, I belong to the whole world. As to my heart, I belong entirely to the heart of Jesus."

— Mother Teresa's response to a journalist probing her identity

Marriage

One might think that because marriage is the smallest of common human organizations, it would be the simplest. The opposite is perhaps the case. For a variety of reasons — including the intimacy involved — in some ways it is the most complex. If this makes marriage sound like mysterious business, you hear correctly. At its worst it can be a living hell, although often a strangely comfortable hell. At its best a long-term marriage is a mystical sort of phenomenon, rich beyond description.

— Scott Peck



125 General Assemblies Ago

The Union of the Churches

That to which we have for years looked forward with expectancy and hope is now an accomplished fact to be acknowledged with devout thankfulness. It is certainly one of the most important events that has occurred in Canada, and one, indeed, which has few parallels in the history of any country.

We don't envy the man who could witness without emotion the ceremonial that took place in the Victoria Hall, Montreal, on the fifteenth day of June, eighteen hundred and seventy-five. It was a magnificent spectacle. Its purpose was a noble one. The arrangements made for its accomplishment, to the minutest details, were faultless and in harmony with the occasion. Altogether, it was a grand and inspiring sight. After long years of separation, the four representatives of the great Presbyterian family of British North America, brought together in the Providence of God from the remotest parts of the land, here met under one roof, in the presence of assembled thousands, to join themselves in solemn covenant to the King and Head of the Church and to one another, and to declare to the world the reconciliation of differences, and their firm resolve, henceforth, to unite their energies and resources in the service of their common Lord and Master. The occasion is far too great and too recent for us to realize its full meaning and importance. As yet we can only say, — "It is the Lord's

The Presbyterian Church in Canada was constituted in June 1875 with 634 ministers; 1,119 congregations; 90,653 communicants; 7,471 Sabbath school teachers and 73,394 scholars.

— from *The Presbyterian*, July 1875

doing." ... We are thankful for the remarkable degree of unanimity which characterized the final proceedings of the several supreme courts in connection with the question of Union. There were in actual attendance on those

courts more than six hundred members, and of these not more than fifteen or sixteen in any way expressed their dissent. We are thankful also for the good spirit that pervaded the meetings of the first General Assembly of the United Church. And we are also very thankful for the kind expressions of congratulation conveyed to us by other churches — the Irish Presbyterian Church, the Presbyterian Church in the United States, the Methodist Church of Canada, and last, but not the least noteworthy, from the representatives of the good old Church of England in Canada. Our hope and trust is that our relationships with these and other churches will ever be as warm and cordial as they now are; that we shall not be contented with a mere formal and courteous recognition, but that we shall be found co-operating with one another wherever and so often as we can. And surely it is a cause of special thankfulness that both the Established Church and the Free Church in the old land have, in their respective Assemblies, given the most unequivocal testimony of their approval of the union now consummated, and also of their earnest desire to maintain the closest possible relations with us in the years to come.

— from *The Presbyterian*, July 1875



The Once and Future Church

In a wide-ranging interview in the March issue of *The Presbyterian Outlook*, Loren Mead, founder of The Alban Institute and author of *The Once and Future Church*, made some interesting comments about present church life and ministry. The Alban Institute was founded in 1974 to research congregational life. It provides practical help through publications, on-site consulting and training services, and continuing educational programs. Mead's remarks could provide the basis for a stimulating discussion at your next session or board meeting.

With regard to the role of the laity, Mead says he sees quieting signs. More and more are deciding their work is more important than church work. He tells of one layman who resigned from a church committee that had spent three months trying to raise \$5,000 to send overseas. In his job, he claimed, he could send millions overseas in a fraction of the time. The committee was wasting his time.

On a related subject, Mead contends "the making of denominational statements as a strategy of influence has outlived its influence." More important, he says, is strengthening the people who actually have power to do something about the issues.

He says we should view the continuing marginalization of mainline churches as a gift. It provides a greater opportunity for us to focus our energies on "the down-to-earth transformation that takes place one community, one family, one person at a time."

Mead suggests governing bodies should cease mandating actions unless they provide resources. Over a two-year period, he collected a large folder of actions that had been mandated by a governing body without offering any help to carry out the commands. I suspect we could construct a similar dossier for most mainline denominations.

His advice to denominations includes the warning that we try to do too much. He claims, for example, that peace churches such as the Mennonites who focus on one or two areas are more effective than most mainline denominations that try to keep a finger in every pie. In a denomination like ours, where consensus is often hard to come by, would we be able to discover an area in which we can minister effectively? If we did, could we agree to give up other areas so that we might become more effective in the one we had chosen?

Mead would like to see denominations bless designated giving. If Hungarian Presbyterian churches in Canada wish to give their mission money to the reconstruction of Eastern Europe, let them. Pushing unified giving, he claims, only frustrates people.

Finally, it's time, he says, the laity be allowed to grow up as theologians. "Theology is too important to be left to clerics."

None of these concepts is foreign to most Presbyterians.

But, then, that is seldom the problem. Helping them become a reality is.

Most of all, we need to realize that, for the majority of our members, there are two Presbyterian Churches: the Governing Body Presbyterian Church (GBPC) and the Local Congregation Presbyterian Church (LCPC). Most members are involved to some extent in the LCPC but probably no more

than 10 per cent have any connection with the GBPC (presbytery, synod or General Assembly). It might make a revealing study if we assessed the amount of resources expended by the national church on these two churches.

From his experience, Mead claims most people enter denominational service "with idealistic hopes, but soon find themselves consumed with meetings and consultations. All these are issues internal to the organization and not the producing of goods and services they hoped to do." He says he knows this is a problem for the church because he has been asked to speak on this subject more than any other.

As I head off to General Assembly in Kitchener, Ontario, it will be interesting to assess whether ideas such as those proposed by Mead play any role in the discussions or impact any of our decisions.

The making of denominational statements as a strategy of influence has outlived its influence

John Congram

Volume CXXIII, No. 6
June 1999
ISSN 0032-7573

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Published on the first of each month except
August by The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

The *Presbyterian Record*, national magazine of
The Presbyterian Church in Canada, is responsi-
ble to the General Assembly. It exists to publish
issues relative to Christian faith and a selection of
current and timely news analyses and opinions of
interest or importance to Presbyterians across
Canada.

Member of The Canadian Church Press and
The Associated Church Press.

Publications Mail Registration No. 0264
Postage paid at Mississauga, Ontario.
Return postage guaranteed.
Send label only.

Subscription Rates
Individual: \$15
Every Home Plan (80% families subscribe): \$9
Club 50 Plan (50% families subscribe): \$11
U.S.A. and Foreign: \$20
Single Copies: \$2
All prices include GST.

Acceptance of advertising does not imply
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Address all correspondence and changes of
address (include label from magazine) to:

Presbyterian Record
50 Wynford Drive
Toronto, Ontario M3C 1J7
Phone: (416) 441-1111
Fax: (416) 441-2825

E-mail: pcrecord@presbyterian.ca
Web site: www.presbycan.ca/record



Reflections on a Moderatorial Year

It is fitting in this final column to reflect on the events of my moderatorial year and to offer a few tentative conclusions that have been forming in my mind.

I travelled from coast to coast. I preached or spoke to at least 70 congregations in 25 presbyteries. I addressed 26 presbytery meetings and one synod meeting. And all three theological colleges invited me to speak. Lois and I also spoke to Women's Missionary Society groups and presbyterials (regrettably, I was unable to accept invitations to speak to two synodicals).

Entering the third millennium with confidence, hope and thanksgiving

Lois and I travelled to Hungary and to Ukraine where we experienced the warm hospitality of the Hungarian Reformed Church and witnessed its significant work. We also visited our mission partners: the Presbyterian Church of East Africa and the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian. We travelled to see several projects funded by Presbyterian World Service and Development in Kenya and in Malawi and to meet with Canadian Presbyterian missionaries and our mission partners. While in Africa, we were

visitors to the Eighth Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Harare, Zimbabwe. I also attended the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Assembly, and Lois and I hope to attend the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. It has been a full and eventful year.

I mention the above not to show I have been busy or to leave the impression that, like Stephen Leacock's horseman, I "rode madly off in all directions," which, indeed, I have. Rather, I wish to base my tentative conclusions on this wide exposure to the work of our church.

The State of The Presbyterian Church in Canada

On the whole, I am tremendously encouraged rather than discouraged by the state of our church. To be sure, we have congregations that are struggling, some dying and others suffering from some kind of conflict. Yet, I visited many congregations that are stronger and more vital than they have ever been in their history. This is also true of some presbyteries. I believe our beloved church has turned a major corner and, by God's grace, we are well-positioned to enter the next century and the third millennium with some degree of confidence and hope.

We have a fine, hard-working and creative national staff. We have deeply dedicated missionaries. We have committed and competent ministers and elders, and a faithful and generous people. Therefore, we can take heart and be thankful to God: "This is the Lord's doing and it is marvellous in our eyes."

Increasingly, I have come to recognize the vitality and strength of our church is in the congregations. Therefore, it is important our church structures serve congregations. Congregations are not, as is sometimes thought, branch offices of the national church or of presbyteries; congre-

(Continued on page 46)

Moderator's Itinerary

June 6 (morning)
First Hungarian, Toronto

June 6 (evening)
General Assembly
St. Andrew's, Kitchener, Ontario

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Our Cover

A stylized burning bush, symbol of the FLAMES initiative

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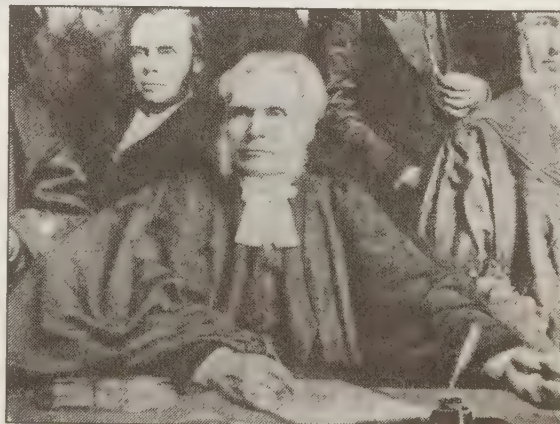
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Debt Forgiveness

The Justice Ministries of The Presbyterian Church in Canada has invited congregations to sign a debt petition as part of a debt forgiveness campaign the Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative is co-ordinating. This is part of an international campaign called Jubilee 2000 that is calling for the millennium to be marked by the cancellation of the debts owing by the world's poorest countries. The debt petition was presented to the Canadian government in May with the request for the petition to be forwarded to the Group of Eight summit meeting in Cologne, Germany, this month.

The case as advocated by the petition is compelling. However, is it likely the funds currently being remitted to creditors will be redirected appropriately if simple and unconditional debt forgiveness is implemented? Many of the poorest countries suffer not only the burden of external debt but also internal repression and maladministration. Simple measures do not usually solve complex problems.

Both the creditors and the debtors hold responsibility for the debts owing by the world's poorest countries. This

means creditors must implement external monitoring to ensure debt relief is appropriately utilized, and debtors must demonstrate a genuine commitment to economic reform and a respect for human rights and good governance. Among other things, this will require the transparency of national accounts by means of full disclosure and independent audit. Generosity must be allied with conditionality.

The heavily indebted countries must also be assisted with the re-establishment of their credit ratings to an acceptable level within the international financial community. Credit is the oil that lubricates economies, and the ability to access credit is an essential and integral element of continuing economic development. Only in this way can the former debtor nations take a rightful and respected place among the family of nations.

*James T. Seidler,
Scarborough, Ont.*

Enjoyed April Issue

I just read the April issue of the *Record*. It was very good — one of the best. All the articles were excellent. Keep up the good work.

*Gunar Kravalis,
Milverton, Ont.*

We publish as many letters as possible. All are subject to editing for meaning and space, and must include the correspondent's name and full address. Letters are intended to provide for the wide expression of views among our readers. Publication does not imply endorsement by either the *Record* or The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Variety of Views

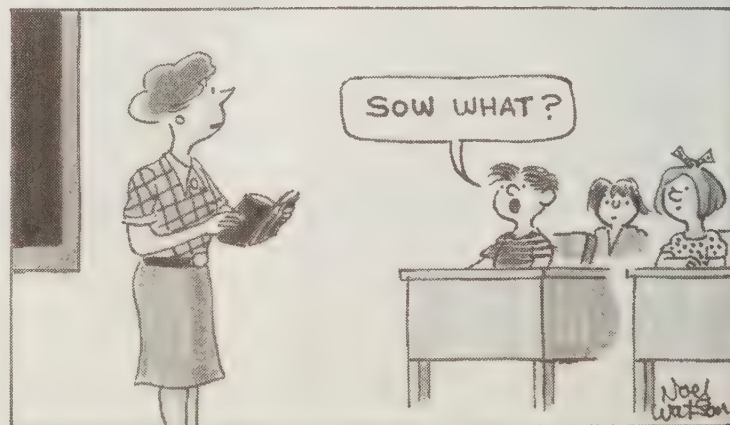
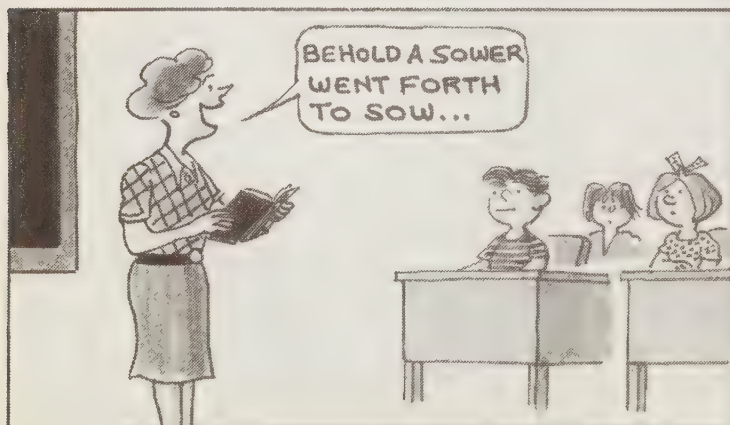
This is a brief endorsement of your excellent comments in "The Importance of Opinions" (April issue). I look forward to each issue with its variety of views. The day we close our minds to ideas that may be new and different is the day we "die."

*Bill Blain,
Waterdown, Ont.*

I read your editorial (opinion) with great interest and pleasure and can't help but fully agree with you, with one exception. Twice you write: "... people are asked to commit to only the bare minimum of things ..." and "... what is required for membership are only the bare

WATSON'S WORLD

Noel Watson



necessities ... " I always interpreted these requirements to represent the true essence of Christianity, hence the *maximum*. Jesus, the only lawyer I know who was able to reduce paragraphs rather than expand them, once said the two most important commandments are: you shall love the Lord your God and you shall love your neighbour as yourself.

Dieter S. Leidel,
Barrie, Ont.

Just read "The Importance of Opinions" (April *Record*). "Praise God!" "Bravo!" "Atta Boy!" Well done! Just thought I'd write and let you know.

Kathy Zandvliet
Windsor, Ont.

Do You Believe This?

I heartily commend the simplicity with which Dr. Klempa restated the heart of the gospel (From the Moderator, April *Record*). It is, indeed, the death and resurrection of Jesus. Death, because God wished to assume all of our condition; resurrection, because God willed to give the divine life for our life. On this side of the resurrection, our fear is death, the end of our life. We do not want to give it up and we clutch it as our prime possession. But the stupendous news of the resurrection is that as we lose our life — most practically by loving our neighbour with all the cost this implies — we find life as it was meant to be. Life is no longer centred in ourselves but in our Creator and Redeemer. There is no other way to die and to live.

Nick Athanasiadis,
Lachute, Que.

From Pieter's Appleyard

"Down, on the Farm" (April *Record*) certainly described conditions I have experienced, though not to the same degree. Strange, Canadians spent a lower percentage of their take-home pay on food than any other western nation in the world. We are also the most adequately fed people. Canadians consume more wheat per capita either directly or indirectly (through meat) in the world; yet, our farmers are being squeezed to the bone.

A workable guaranteed price system set at the farm gate does not work for most commodities. In apples, the packer often gives in to the pressure from the chain store buyers and takes his losses out of the returns that should go to the grower. As reliable (and honest) packers are frequently hard to come by, this has led to a tremendous rise in pick-your-own farms — obviously no option for the pig farmer.

When I started farming and spent so many hours by myself among the trees, I talked a lot to God (like the man in *Fiddler on the Roof*). I wanted to grow apples organically, thinking I was doing the will of God. But everything went wrong, and I felt God did not listen. Then, I pursued an integrated pest management (IPM) program. I learned the life cycle of the predatory and damaging insects and, finally, became so familiar with this part of farming that, in the last two years before we sold our orchard, it was selected as one of 10 Ontario orchards for an advanced IPM experimental program. I then realized chemical usage can be cut back to the point that, on most apples, no chemical sprays need to be used for a full three months before harvest.

I guess God told me to use my head. God's ways are often not so mysterious!

Pieter Wyminga
Colborne, Ont.

Increasing the Demands

It seems laughable that the words of Abraham Lincoln, "In giving freedom to the slave we assure freedom to the free," should be applied to the money raising effort of Jane Roy and the Elmwood church in London to buy slaves in Sudan (February *Record*). Lincoln made it illegal to buy slaves for good reason. No doubt, a slave owner who sells one slave to a top bidder will have two slaves to sell next year. If the fathers of the Dinka tribe are being murdered now, and the women and children sold into slavery, to how many more will that happen because we've increased the demand.

Irvin R. Macklin,
Wanham, Alta.

"I don't know
what I'd do without
this place." Almost
every morning, he's
here before we open
to help set up and he
stays until the clean-
ing is finished in the
afternoon. He helps in
many ways through-
out the morning. He
says it gives his life
some meaning, that
he can always find
a sympathetic ear
among the staff. Our
answer to him? "We
don't know what we'd
do without you!"

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LETTERS

Saddened

I was saddened to read Gail Turner's letter — "The Success of Pacifism" (April *Record*). She wrote: "One of the great stories of our century is the defeat of the apartheid regime in South Africa — a regime that certainly equalled the Nazis in determination and brutality."

As one who lived in South Africa for virtually my whole life, including the apartheid era, and who fought against the Nazis in the Second World War, I can only assume Gail Turner is unaware of the Holocaust in Europe and of the true facts about South Africa.

Charles de Greeff,
White Rock, B.C.

A Portrait of Yeshua

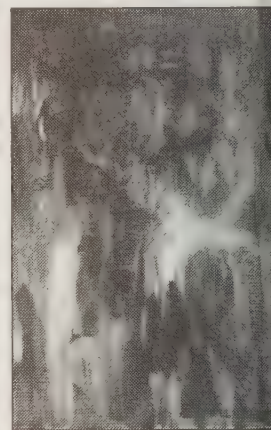
What a delight to see Daniel Forget's magnificent painting *Yeshua* on one of our denomination's Lenten bulletins this year. Through the written Word, the Gospel writers have given us four unique and vivid portraits of Yeshua. Now, we have Daniel's unique portrait in vivid colour through strokes of a paintbrush.

What does the eye of faith see in this painting? The covenant rainbow? The cross? Light? Darkness? Joy? Pain? The glory of God? The burning bush? The faces of people? Movement, both upward and downward?

For the people who believe "Yeshua is God," this painting must be an answer to prayer. It is not idolatrous, as is the case with many artistic conceptions of Jesus — with the long, reddish hair and the sad and solemn but sincere Teutonic countenance! (Jesus was a Jew, and, if painted, should be depicted as such!)

Perhaps Forget's portrait will encourage sessions to remove all graven images — cleansing all "Presbyterian temples." It will, however, lead many to cry foul!

Wilfred M. Moncrieff,
Peterborough, Ont.



Rev. Glen Soderholm, Dr. Bill Klempa,
Dr. Terry Ingram, Rev. Calvin Brown

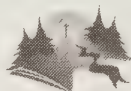
WHY ARE THESE PRESBYTERIAN MINISTERS GETTING TOGETHER?

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Place: Crieff Hills Community, Puslinch, ON

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Graven Images

Mount Wai'ale'ale, on the island of Kauai in the Hawaiian Islands, claims to be "The Wettest Place on Earth." It has good grounds for that claim. Year after year, about 1,100 centimetres of rain fall at the peak. To put that into perspective: if none of it ran off, one year's rainfall would be about 11 metres deep. It would flood the fourth floor of a building.

The rain doesn't all stay up at the top of Wai'ale'ale, of course. All that rain running off has carved what Kauaians call "The Grand Canyon of the Pacific." Waimea Canyon is less than a kilometre deep, half the depth of the canyon of the Colorado River. But, like the Grand Canyon, the water has excavated its way through a kaleidoscope of colours of rock, forming an intricate maze of cliffs and ridges and bright threads tracing the bottom of the valleys, far below.

Yet, it is not an undisputed claim. Cherripundi in India may be even wetter. Not every year — that's the basis of the dispute. But, one year, Cherripundi had more than 1,800 centimetres of rain — a column of water 18 metres high! In one 24-hour period, it had 91 centimetres of rain. I've seen 2½ centimetres of rain in Canada during a particularly violent and prolonged thunderstorm. Windshield wipers can't keep up with that volume of water. Water gushes out of overloaded sewers. Golf courses turn into lakes. Umbrellas collapse. Now imagine that continuing for 24 hours without a break ...

I can understand Mount Everest being the highest place on earth. Or the Dead Sea, the lowest. I can understand someone attempting to set a world record for the 100 metres, or the mile. But I have trouble understanding our obsession with uniqueness — especially when being unique is not particularly desirable. Such as being the wettest place on earth. Or having the world's largest fake Easter egg. Or being the world's bindertwine capital or birthplace of the world's only three-headed calf. If we can believe movie propaganda, there's even competition for the world's most callous killer or the worst mobster ...

A few years ago, I chanced across a book by Diana Eck, *Encounters with God: From Bozeman to Banaras*. Eck, a professor of religion at Harvard, explores significant differences and similarities between Christianity and Hinduism. It sounds like an esoteric subject. It's not, though.

For example, she suggests that this obsession with uniqueness derives from the myth of monotheism. "Myth," the way she uses it, doesn't mean falsehood — it means a concept so deeply ingrained in our culture and our thoughts that we are no more aware of it than we are of the air we breathe.

"Hear, O Israel," cries the *shema* in Deuteronomy, "the Lord is our God, the Lord alone." That's monotheism. There is, there can be, only one God.

In our race for ultimate claims, we usurp God's uniqueness

It becomes a myth — a foundational assumption about our world and ourselves — when we extrapolate that principle to other situations. Every claim has to be unique, ultimate. Toronto claims its CN Tower as the "world's tallest free-standing structure." Mount McKinley is proclaimed as the highest mountain in North America, Mount Logan the highest in Canada, Mount Waddington the highest in British Columbia, Mount Robson the highest in the Canadian

Rockies. The entire *Guinness Book of World Records* depends on this myth — that someone or something can be the fastest, slowest, fattest, thinnest, wettest, driest, coldest, hottest, greediest, laziest ... or most disgusting, such as throwing up most often in an hour without dying.

And, now, I realize why the concept bothers me. Because it takes something intended only for God and applies it to ourselves.

The second commandment given to Moses creates a direct corollary to the *shema*. It says, "Thou shalt not make any graven images." God says, in effect: "Do not try to copy me." But isn't that what we do, as soon as we try to make ultimate and unique claims? To become the one and only?

We try to usurp the uniqueness of God. **R**

Jim Taylor is a writer, editor and co-founder of Wood Lake Books.



Summer Singing & Psalm 124

Late in the August lectionary readings is a disciplined, short and stirring poetic piece that bears the title "Psalm 124." It should not be overlooked. Like a number of other psalms, this one is identified as "of David," suggesting it was written by, or at least edited and collected by, this best-known king of Israel. While 73 psalms are attributed to David, Psalm 72 and Psalm 127 are credited to Solomon, and Psalm 90 to Moses.

Psalms such as 45 and 101 clearly suggest the time of David and the monarchy. Other psalms appear to be earlier in composition. Psalm 19:2-7, for example, looks similar to a Canaanite psalm and Psalm 29 appears to be based on an early hymn to the Canaanite storm god Baal-hadad. The exile in Babylon is presupposed in psalms such as 126 and 137. Not only are some events later than David, but the language and thought also often display time later than that of David. Hymn-writers have always used the raw material of their time and place.

The compilation seems to have begun with a number of separate collections. This may explain why three psalms are duplicated: Psalm 14 = Psalm 53, Psalm 40:13-17 = Psalm 70, Psalm 57:5, 11 and Psalm 60:5-12 = Psalm 108. Psalms 42 and 43 seem to be part of a single psalm. The Greek translation, the Septuagint, linked Psalm 9 to 10 and Psalm 114 to 115; it also divided psalms 116 and 147 each into two parts. An additional psalm, 151, is included in some manuscripts of the Septuagint and in the Syriac version.

Although many of the psalms had their origin in the time of the Davidic monarchy, they are best seen as a collection that includes material from long before to long after David. Like our modern hymn-books, the psalms range

over a long period of time in composition and are a complex and comprehensive collection of different topics and varied theologies. In terms of content and theology, Psalm 124 could have been written almost any time from the Exodus to the day before yesterday!

Psalm 124 is also identified in the superscription as "A Psalm of Ascent," one of the series that extends from 120-134. These are also known as "Pilgrim" or "Hallel"

psalms and appear to have been sung as the pilgrims slowly mounted the 15 steps to the Court of the Women at the Jerusalem Temple. Other psalms bear superscriptions that relate to the names of the guilds of Levitical singers who are mentioned in the books of Chronicles.

"If it had not been ... If it had not been ... " begins the psalm. The liturgical repetition enforces faith's assertion: "If it had not been the Lord who was on our side ... " The phrase resonates with Romans 8:31: "What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us?"


If God, our "difficult friend," had not been for us, we would be victims indeed. If not for God in our lives, then what? Faith shudders. If not God, then we would be lost: "swallowed ... up alive," "swept ... away," lost to "the flood," "the torrent," the "raging waters" of a "ravenous enemy," chaos and destruction.

But God, though difficult, as our Jewish friends remind us, is not impossible and, though we have suffered, we have survived. We have escaped the teeth of those that would tear us apart and the "snare of wrong pleasures that hunt after us." Three cheers to God, says the psalmist, we've escaped — flown like a bird from the torn net of the bird-catcher.

Without God in our lives? Faith shudders

Space permits only passing reference to the frequent use of the psalms in the New Testament, especially on the tongue of Jesus and in the life of the Early Church. Our denomination has long placed a metric psalm as the first hymn of public worship. Psalm 124 is paraphrased in *The Book of Praise* (1997) as number 85, "Now Israel May Say." We also regularly include a responsive or unison psalm reading as part of our Sunday worship.

The Psalter continues to be used in public worship, for individual teaching, as a foundation of family worship, a book of comfort, a collection of prayers and a guide to God in times of joy and affliction (A. Weiser).

The psalm ends with the strong affirmation "Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth." No wonder that, in their private devotion, the members of the Jewish Chevrah Tehillim (Psalms Society) read through the psalms once a week! 

For Discussion and Reflection

- Compare Psalm 124 with Romans 8:18-39.
- Read the psalm from several translations, preferably out loud.
- Write a paraphrase of the psalm.
- Compare the psalm as it appears in the 1972 and 1997 editions of *The Book of Praise* — number 56 and 85 respectively.

L. E. (Ted) Siverns is the minister of First Church in New Westminster, B.C.

Another Way to Celebrate the Millennium

Zander Dunn

I was pleased when John Congram, as Moderator of the 123rd General Assembly, suggested The Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCC) engage in talks with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (From the Moderator, October 1997 *Record*). However, that idea raised a question for me: If we can dialogue with the Lutherans, why do we not talk with The United Church of Canada?

Various ideas have been presented as to how we might celebrate the year 2000. This year, the PCC will hold its 125th General Assembly, launching 125th celebrations that will extend into the year 2000. At the same time, the United Church will be celebrating the 75th anniversary of its existence in Canada. Let's use this opportunity to begin talks with the United Church. The purpose of those conversations need not commit us to an organic union, but they could possibly prepare us for such a step.

We live in a country different from 1925. Three generations have been born since "The Union" or "The Disunion" of 1925. Both churches require a new co-operative strategy to face the new millennium. The two denominations already have much in common. The people of The United Church of Canada are our closest Christian relatives. Our members transfer back and forth without difficulty. Indeed, they tell us they see few differences between the two churches at worship. My wife grew up within the United Church. She believes her training, her theology

and her relationships there prepared her well to become a committed member of the Presbyterian Church.

In many places, United Church and Presbyterian congregations combine for worship in the summer to allow their ministers to get away for vacations. In several settings, Presbyterians have made comity arrangements with the United Church to avoid competition and overlapping. We receive ministers from The United Church of Canada into our church, and they receive ministers from our denomination.

The governances of our churches are similar — with minor differences. In the United Church, ordination of ministers occurs at the conferences (synods); we ordain ministers in the presbyteries. In the United Church, the General Council convenes every two years (although it is trying a three-year term); in the Presbyterian Church, our General Assembly meets every year.

Many congregations in The United Church of Canada are more Presbyterian than many congregations within our denomination that is often criticized for being too congregational. We could gain from their Presbyterian approach, and we could contribute to them out of our experience.

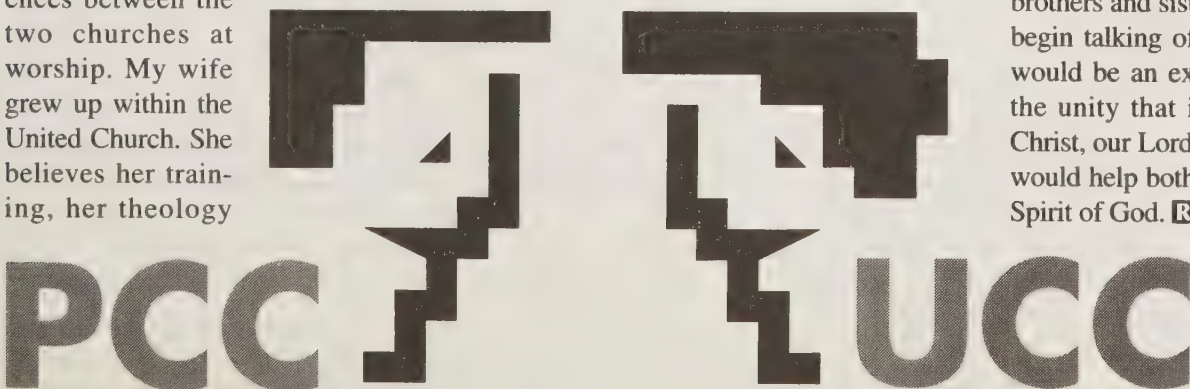
A case for uniting with the United Church

Both The United Church of Canada and The Presbyterian Church in Canada are members of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches. Both are considered to be within the Presbyterian family. While it is true both denominations have grown apart and have changed since 1925, it is also true we overlap in most areas. Our ministers study the same theologians, deal with the same issues and are part of the same culture in Canada.

My attitudes have been forged by my experience in Guyana as well as in Canada. In Guyana, the churches worked together and crossed denominational lines because they did not have the money, the ministers or the energy to do everything separately. In Canada, so far, we are rich enough to remain separate. Before the time comes when we are forced to unite, why not become informed about one another? Let us be intentional about working together and about planning for that day when those things that separate us can be removed.

I applaud the suggestion that we dialogue with Lutherans. But, before or while we undertake that, let us enter into negotiations with The United Church of Canada where so many of our closest brothers and sisters in the faith reside. To begin talking officially in the year 2000 would be an excellent way to celebrate the unity that is already ours in Jesus Christ, our Lord. Even more important, it would help both churches open up to the Spirit of God. **R**

Zander Dunn, minister of Knox Church in Guelph, Ont., will retire at the end of this month.



The Special Friends Club

Chricket Yule

The Special Friends Club began in November 1995 in the town of Hillsburgh, Ontario, as a recreational program for developmentally challenged adolescents. Two former teachers, Barb Perkins and Chricket Yule, recognized a need for social interaction for these young people. They had three main goals: to provide a safe, caring, social opportunity for these special adolescents; to provide respite for their families; and to offer a support group for the parents. Three years later, this group attracts youth from six neighbouring communities.

The Special Friends Club meets on Saturdays at St. Andrew's Church in Hillsburgh. During the summer, a six-week day camp also takes place. From 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., the young people enjoy crafts, games, cooking, music, therapeutic riding, gardening and field trips.

During the winter of 1997-98, Barb and Chricket worked on long-range planning and the problem of finances. The Special Friends Club does not have a source of ongoing funding. Over the past three years, it has received one-time grants from the Epilepsy Research Fund of Canada, the Guelph United Way and the Guelph-Wellington Association for Community Living.

All other funds must be generated through service clubs, donations, car washes, bake sales, auctions, garage sales and concerts. It is a tiresome struggle.

Because the youth love to make crafts and cook, it dawned on Barb and Chricket that, maybe, the club should try to sell these goods to help cover some of the costs. The problem was, where to sell them? The idea of a portable "store" trailer seemed good. However, the club did not have spare cash.

Fairlie Ritchie, minister of St. Andrew's Church, told us about the Experimental Fund which she read about in the *Presbyterian Record*. The fund awards grants on a one-time basis to projects that are innovative, self-contained and involve special work. The Special Friends Club applied for help in purchasing a second-hand trailer. The wonderful, positive response came in May 1998!

We were excited the Experimental Fund believed in this project. Barb and Chricket found the perfect trailer locally. Inside are two work-table areas. McKinnon Lumber built more counter space and storage units. Dutch Boy Cleaners cleaned the seat cushions. Club members spent days during summer camp scrubbing, priming and painting the exterior of the trailer. Then, Olga Dafoe began her creative magic on this huge "artist's canvas" — turning an old, plain white trailer into a beautiful, yellow Victorian cottage!

The trailer made its debut at the Special Friends car wash, bake sale and garage sale last October. It appeared next at the Erin Fall Fair where the youth sold their crafts and preserves. Everyone was amazed at the new store. The community feedback was positive and sales were terrific.

The trailer project has been called "God's Garden." That name has been painted on the trailer along with "The Presbyterian Church in Canada." The trailer sat all summer beside the Special



Special Friends Club: (left to right) Jamie Murray (staff), Ryan Gault (staff), Daniel Stroop, Becky Perkins, Scott McDougall, Jessica MacNaughton, Missy Kidd, Michelle Dafoe (staff).

Friends Club's organic garden at the farm of John and Barb Perkins. Last spring, the club invited Mitchell Hewson, head of horticulture therapy at Homewood Health Care Centre in Guelph, Ontario, to speak to the parents group. He inspired everyone with how gardening could be a soothing pastime for challenged youth and how garden produce could make wonderful crafts.

The trailer became a potting shed and vegetable preparation area. At day's end, it was a change room before a rewarding swim. The youth grew herbs, flowers and vegetables. A food co-op in Guelph contracted the club to grow organic onions. The trailer store was stocked with jams, pickles and decorations made with produce from the garden.

The trailer has taken the Special Friends Club to a new level of community involvement. Club members and staff are thankful to the Experimental Fund. Another dream has come true for this special group of adolescents. **R**

Chricket Yule and Barb Perkins co-ordinate the Special Friends Club at St. Andrew's Church in Hillsburgh, Ont.

My dear editor:

This is, of course, General Assembly Month, Stamp Out Athlete's Foot Month, Dear Lord When Will the Hockey Season Ever End Month and, in the United States, Tourism Canada's big promotion month — "Keep Canada Green! Bring LOTS of American Money!" It is the first of these specials that concerns me here.

As a service to the commissioners to the 125th General Assembly, and to the hordes of eager customers who will be snapping up freshly printed newspapers bearing coverage in banner headlines (Whoops! Sorry, I must have been thinking of an old Dick Powell movie), I offer the following survey results. The survey was conducted by CROP (Canadians Researching Ongoing Presbyterianism) and Angus-Reid. (Little Angus Black and Jimmy Reid are presbytery's computer magicians, and we've forgiven them for hacking into the main-frame at Wynford Drive. They were, after all, simply living their vision, and they did get the highest mark in Grade 10 for the project.) Cross-referencing was done by Plymley Pyrotechnics. The results are considered accurate 19 times out of 20 within a percentage of 61.73 either way. Percentages may not add up to 100 because little does these days.

What do you think of homosexual persons holding office within The Presbyterian Church in Canada?

- I try not to. (66%)
- We must love the sinner and hate the sin ... but preferably from a different room. (17%)
- Over the years, they have served the church well. (17%)

In your opinion, what is the biggest problem facing our church?

- The music (33%)
- The music (33%)
- The music (33%)

What is your favourite hymn?

- "Amazing Grace" (20%)
- "Amazing Grace" played on the bagpipes (20%)
- Anything that has a good beat and you can dance to (20%)
- "The Church's One Foundation" but not too fast (20%)
- That one about the shiny Jesus (20%)

What do you think of FLAMES?

- They'll probably be sold and move to Houston. (42%)
- Why didn't the church ever think of this before? (31%)
- A fit destiny for liberal-types (27%)

Are you premillennialist, postmillennialist or amillennialist?

- What? (5%)
- Yes (4%)
- Excuse me, I have to ... (3%)

What do you plan to do in response to the Celebrate! initiative our church is undertaking for the millennium?

- What initiative? (26%)
- What millennium? (26%)
- Aye, if we celebrate now, we'll pay for it in the next millennium! (26%)
- I'm going to take a nice nap. (3%)
- I'm going to visit my sister in Medicine Hat. (0.5%)

From CROP and Angus-Reid comes the latest survey on Presbyterianism

What do you think of the Presbyterian Record?

- It's user-friendly, portable, biodegradable and has no additives or artificial colouring! (88%)
- I'll buy it if it has that shiny Jesus song in it. (6%)
- I can't play it on my 8-track. (6%)

What do you think of the new Book of Praise?

- It's a beaut! Multicultural, intergenerational, feminist and low calorie. (42%)
- I'm waiting for the user's manual. (27%)
- Our 1918 edition hasn't worn out yet. (21%)
- They're too big for our book-racks. (10%)

What do you think of the new Psalter?

- I like it, but I wish they'd scored it for cymbals, timbrel and harp. (54%)
- They left in too many violent bits. (18%)
- Too papist! (13%)
- If the psalter has lots its psavour, wherewith shall it be psalted? (8%)
- What's a psalter? (7%)

What advice would you give to a newly ordained minister?

- People on their deathbeds have never wished they had gone to more meetings. (82%)
- They should visit more. And mine always comes on my bridge day or when *Coronation Street* is on or when I go to have coffee with my sister! (7%)
- We're trying. We know you're trying. We're all very trying at one time or another. (6%)
- Preach more on the Book of Revelation! (5%)

Hoping this data makes life easier for the shapers of our sanctity,

Your semi-roving reporter,

Peter Plymley II

Fanning the FLAMES

by Mark Lewis



We should have seen the dangers of unleashing an acronym upon the fertile imaginations of Presbyterians. Within 10 minutes of the 1998 General Assembly adopting the FLAMES initiative, several brilliant and creative commissioners handed me notes with new, improved versions of the FLAMES acronym. One comedic genius asked, "Does that stand for Feeble Liturgy Always Makes Everyone Sleepy?" Another Pulitzer Prize winner who accidentally became a Presbyterian minister suggested, First, Let's Abandon Mindless and Endless Sermons. And, in response to the last two aspiring Seinfelds who wrote about the FLAMES, yes, we realize if we forget the first and last priorities, it becomes the LAME initiative; and, no, FLAMES does not stand for Friendly Laity Allow Ministers Excessive Stipends.

Notwithstanding the work of these creative friends, the

**Behind the bright
image of FLAMES
lie the great priorities
of our church**

FLAMES acronym stands for the six priorities The Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCC) will emphasize over the next six years. We will thank God for the great work he has done through us in the past, celebrate our values in the present and sharpen our focus for a confident and powerful entry into the 21st century.

Focus on Children, Teens and Young Adults
Laity Equipping
Active Evangelism
Mission: National, International and Justice
Education for Laity and Clergy
Spirituality

The Long-Range Planning Committee set out in 1995 to discover the highest priorities of Canadian Presbyterians. We thoroughly researched Presbyterian studies back into the 1950s looking for themes and patterns. We listened to the voices of

Presbyterians up to the 1996 think-tank that brought Presbyterians together from across Canada. We invited all presbyteries and congregations to respond to the think-tank. Despite the diversity and depth of our denomination, these six priorities emerged:

- Education for clergy and laity
- Mission inclusive of international, national and justice
- Empowering laity
- Children, teen and young adult ministry
- Evangelism
- Spirituality.

The General Assembly of 1997 approved these, declaring they would be the focus as the PCC moves into the 21st century. The Long-Range Planning Committee took up the task of presenting the six priorities to the whole church in a striking format that would ensure they would not be lost or forgotten. Properly presented, they could unify and inspire Canadian Presbyterians to new and exciting ministries in the 21st century. We also wanted to proclaim that the six priorities affirmed the great work of our church in the past. After many attempts to package the priorities, we noted that, with a few changes in wording, the first letters in the priorities could be arranged to spell out the word FLAMES. It was a moment of the great aha! Presbyterians have always been called and inspired by the flames of the burning bush. What better way to enter a new millennium than by turning again to the flames and calling on God to rekindle our fire.

The motto "Fanning the FLAMES" and the rejuvenated image of the burning bush quickly followed the development of the FLAMES acronym. We hope both the motto and the logo will inspire images of renewal, rebirth and revival. The 1998 General Assembly approved the use of the acronym, the new logo and the motto. We chose the Mistral font for the lettering in the FLAMES initiative because of its free-flowing character. Later, we learned a mistral is a wind system that blows across the Mediterranean at the end of winter and heralds the arrival of spring.

The seven red flames in the logo represent the seven years of the FLAMES priorities (seven is the number of wholeness). The five green leaves represent the living church filled with grace (five is the number of grace). The two brown stems represent the Word of God on which our church is built (the two represent two testaments, Old and New). The three blue swirls represent the Holy Spirit fanning our flames to new life (three is the number of the Trinity). This dynamic presentation of the burning bush is meant to convey movement, openness to the Holy Spirit and the possibility of the FLAMES leaping higher than ever before.

We hope congregations will use the FLAMES initiative in two ways. First, we hope the logo and the motto will promote the image of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. This bold logo was designed to convey a bright, colourful and dynamic image. Use the FLAMES logo as an advertising and promotional tool. Several congregations are already working on banners, pulpit falls and stained glass art. The artist has given the logo, without any copyright restrictions, for whatever creative use desired.

Secondly, we call on all Presbyterians to use the FLAMES for a deeper purpose. Behind the bright and colourful

image lie the great priorities that form the foundation of our church. We hope congregations will carefully examine their ministries and programs to see if they reflect the priorities of the FLAMES. We hope congregations will join the whole church in emphasizing the chosen priority for each year of the FLAMES initiative.

June 1999 - June 2000, for example, is the year of "Mission." Perhaps your congregation will use that year to initiate new mission projects that have been on hold. Perhaps there is some form of outreach badly needed in your community and our "Year of Mission" will give the extra impetus to move on it. June 2000 - June 2001 is the year of "Focus on Children, Teens and Young Adults." The emphasis on this priority will give your congregation cause to revisit the question of children at Communion, or to reach out with new ministry to young adults. The order of the priorities over the next six years:

June 1999 - June 2000 — Mission: National, International and Justice

June 2000 - June 2001 — Focus on Children, Teens and Young Adults

June 2001 - June 2002 — Laity Equipping

June 2002 - June 2003 — Active Evangelism

June 2003 - June 2004 — Spirituality

June 2004 - June 2005 — Education for Laity and Clergy

What better way to enter a new millennium than by turning again to the flames and calling on God to rekindle our fire

Many agencies of our church have already re-examined their priorities and reorganized their work in response to the FLAMES priorities. At a national level, the initiative is helping our church to sharpen its focus as we enter the 21st century. And congregations and presbyteries are already assigning the FLAMES initiative to existing committees or creating new committees to promote it.

No other major Canadian denomination has prepared for the millennium or planned to celebrate its work and focus its priorities as Presbyterians have. We have received requests from as far away as Rio de Janeiro where the Presbyterian Church in Brazil is seeking an outline of the FLAMES initiative upon which to structure its entry into the 21 century.

The Long-Range Planning Committee and the Assembly Council are fulfilling a significant part of their mandate in presenting the FLAMES initiative. We have listened to the voice of the grassroots. We are claiming our prophetic role and acting as dreamers and visionaries within the church. The success of this initiative now lies with congregations and presbyteries. How will you promote the FLAMES? What exciting new ministries will your congregation undertake in response? Will God kindle our FLAMES to new heights in the 21st century? **B**

John Mark Lewis, minister of MacNab Street Church in Hamilton, Ontario, is convener of the General Assembly Council and convener of the National Long-Range Planning Committee.

The History of the Black Church in Canada

by Denise Gillard

Black people have been a recorded part of the Canadian experience since at least 1604, testifying to a 400-year presence in Canada. They come from three main groups: those living in Canada for generations and immigrants from the Caribbean and Africa.

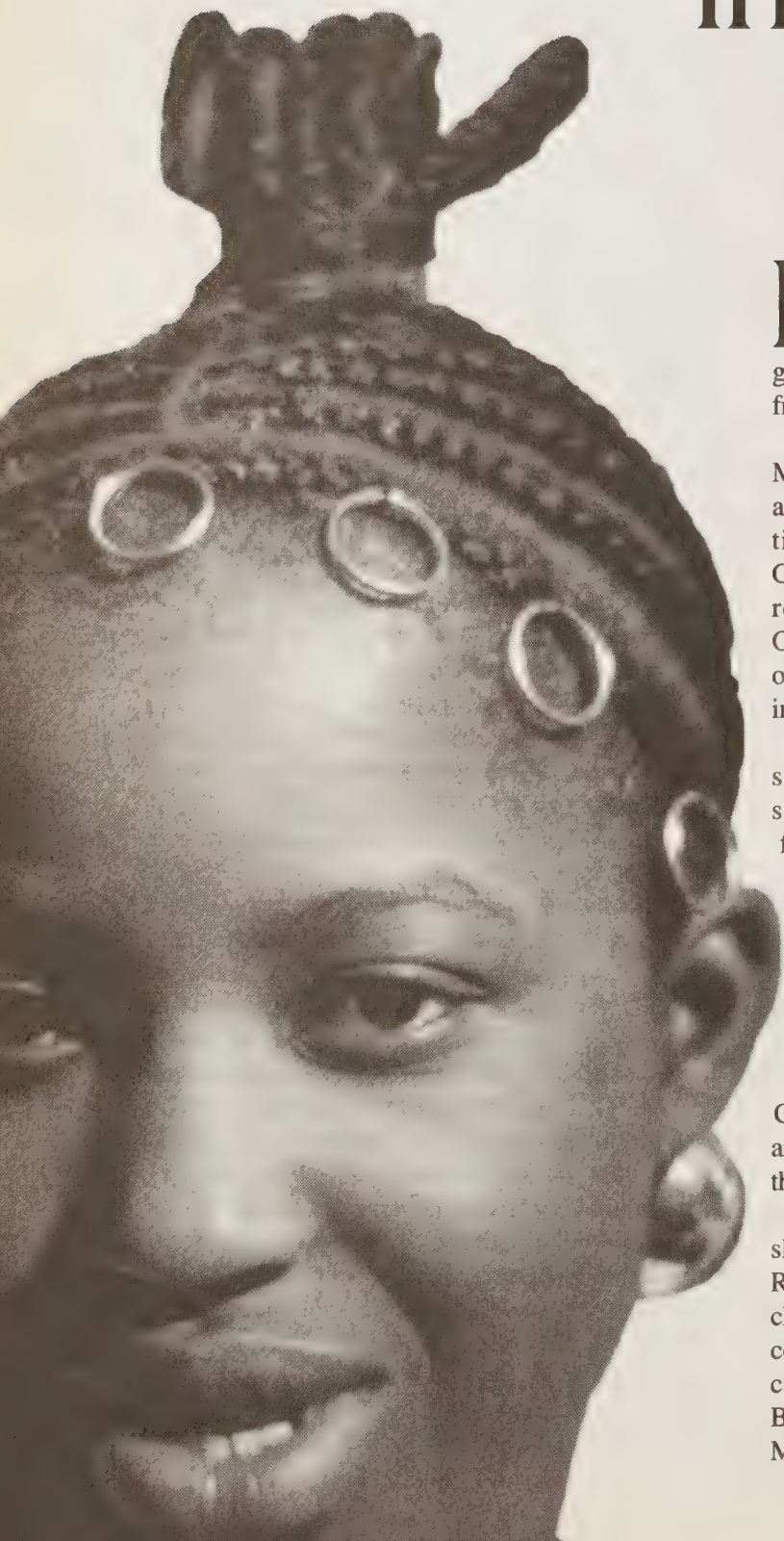
The first known black person to arrive in Canada was Mathieu d'Acosta. He was a member of the expedition team of Samuel de Champlain. The first black resident of Canada was Oliver LeJeune, a six-year-old slave boy. He arrived in Canada about 1628.

The Canadian black slavery experience was similar to, yet different

from, that of the Caribbean and the American colonies. In all three regions, the elements of subjugation of one race by another, the exploitation of human labour and the maximization of profits were present. Massive slave labour worked the sugar plantations of the Caribbean and the cotton plantations of the American colonies, the backbone of those economies. In Canada, however, slavery existed within a more diverse economy and on a smaller scale. At times, Canada brought African slaves from the American colonies and the Caribbean for special projects, such as the building of the city of Halifax.

A paradoxical relationship existed between the church and slavery. For a long time, both coexisted comfortably. In the Roman Catholic colony of New France, for example, the church did not oppose or speak out against slavery. Religious communities (including the Jesuits, Dominicans and Franciscans), the Ursulines in Louisiana (Diocese of Quebec), the Brothers of Charity at Louisburg and the Benevolent Mother Marie d'Youville (who ran the Hospital-General) — all owned

The church was the earliest and most important institution for black communities in Canada



slaves. Baptism, Communion and burial were regular ministries afforded the slaves.

In 1775, when the American colonies rebelled against British rule, many American colonists loyal to Britain moved to Canada. The British encouraged this move and gave permission for these Loyalists to bring their slaves. After the war broke out, Britain offered freedom to any slave who joined British forces. More than 30,000 United Empire Loyalists entered the Maritimes. Among them were black and white Loyalists as well as black slaves owned by white Loyalists.

Britain promised land, supplies and citizenship to all Loyalists. But many promises were broken, leaving both white and black Loyalists disappointed. In their book *Victorious in Defeat: The Loyalists in Canada*, Brown and Senior sum up the black Loyalists' experience in Nova Scotia: "The majority got no land; the minority who did received smaller, poorer and less accessible lands than whites. By November 1786 when grants to whites had been completed in Shelburne, none of the Birchtown blacks had received farms. Two years later when the Birchtown grants were completed, only about a third of the settlers had been awarded farms."

On their arrival in Nova Scotia in 1783, black Loyalists who were predominantly Anglicans, Methodists and Baptists found themselves relegated to second-class status in the church. Most blacks believed baptism in the Anglican Church would make them "one and equal with whites." John Breynton, the rector of St. Paul's, Halifax, baptized hundreds of black people. Although they could attend services and receive Communion, they were segregated from white parishioners. They were forced into galleries set apart for blacks, the poor and soldiers. By 1815, black worshippers were kept behind a partition. As the white membership increased, some black parishioners were advised to gather for worship in their homes. Nova Scotian blacks turned to their own lay preachers and teachers in the segregated communities to meet their spiritual needs.

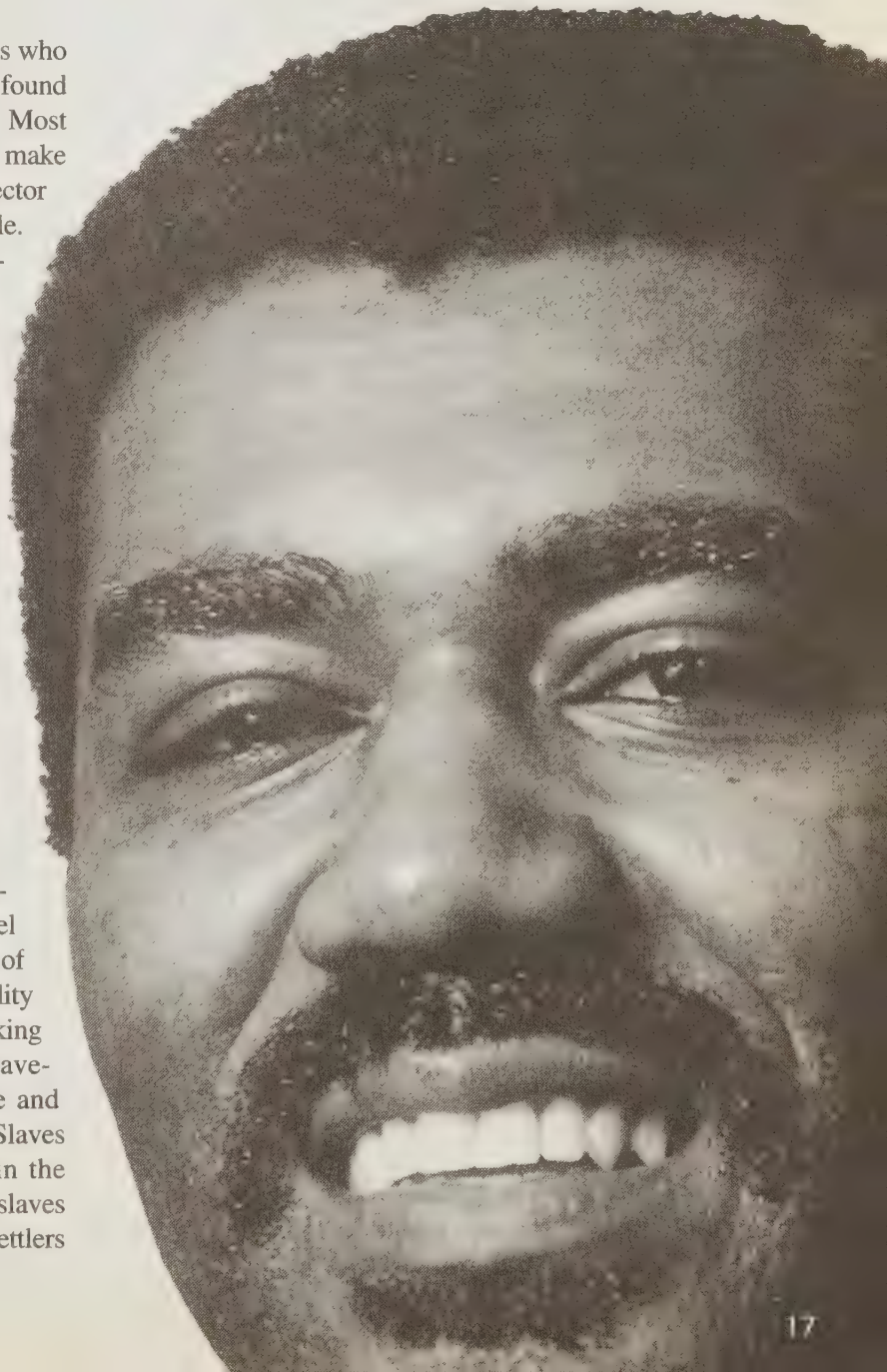
Britain established a colony in Sierra Leone as an answer to the impending abolition of the slave trade. This colony was created as a "catchment" for freed slaves. As blacks lost hope in Canada's ability to secure safe and viable communities for them, some immigrated to Sierra Leone. The community lost outstanding preachers and community leaders.

Upper Canada's black story bears much resemblance to the story in New France and Nova Scotia. In 1791, William Wilberforce introduced a bill to stop the importation of slaves to the British colonies. In that year, Colonel John Graves Simcoe became the first lieutenant-governor of Upper Canada. After becoming acquainted with the brutality of slavery still present in Upper Canada, he began working for its abolition. Within two years, Simcoe and the slave-holding Chief Justice Osgoode reached a compromise and passed "The Act to Prevent the Further Introduction of Slaves and to Limit the Terms of Enforced Servitude Within the Province." This provided for the freedom of children of slaves after they reached the age of 25 and it prevented new settlers from bringing slaves into the province.

After the War of 1812, Upper Canada's attorney general ruled that, by being residents of Canada, black people were deemed free. Fugitive slaves began trickling into Canada through the Underground Railway. The American Congress passed the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, making slave escape more dangerous and expensive. However, there was a dramatic increase in the black population of Upper Canada — about 30,000 entered Canada between 1800 and 1860.

Once the fugitive slaves reached freedom, they immediately assembled for worship. The church became an important institution in the community, providing spiritual care, education and the social and economic organizations necessary for building new communities. Daniel G. Hill, in his book *The Freedom Seekers*, asserts: "The earliest and most important institutions in all black Upper Canadian communities were the churches."

Canadian Christian missionary organizations became involved in outreach ministries. They funded and encouraged the development of black congregations. While most of these organizations were Methodists and Baptists, Presbyterians and



Briefly noted

Honoured: *Ken Grant*, elder, St. Giles Church, Sarnia, Ont., with a 1999 Ontario Volunteer Service Award for more than 30 years of service to visually impaired people.

Travelling: *Rev. Terry and Susan Samuel* to the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, Kenya, for three months.

Returned: *Stewart Gillan*, after 12 years in South Africa. Currently serving as part-time minister at Gateway Community Church, Toronto, and engaged in research for International Ministries.

Visitors: *Mercy Ravikant*, worker with the Community Health Program in Jobat, Mendha and Amkhut, India, April 23 to May 14. *Mercy Chilapula*, women's desk of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, Blantyre Synod, Malawi, May 5-14.

On furlough: *Pauline Brown*, worker with the Community Health Program of the Church of North India and Jobat Christian Hospital, February 15 to May 14. *Joe Reed*, area missionary liaison for Central America and the Caribbean, April 12 until General Assembly. *Denise Van Wissen*, worker with Soynica in Ocotal, northern Nicaragua, April 29 until General Assembly.

Congregational changes: *St. Andrew's, Avonmore, St. James-St. Andrew's, Gravel Hill, and St. Luke's-Knox, Finch, Ont.*, now a three-point charge. **New congregations:** *Kelowna Korean, Kelowna B.C.*, constituted January 13. *Pilgrim Korean, Toronto*, constituted April 15.

Resigned: *Mark Tremblay* as minister of St. Andrew's Church, Hamilton, Bermuda, to pursue further studies. Continues as stated supply for one year.

Retired: *Rev. John Cameron* of Stratford, P.E.I., May 1. *Rev. Desmond Howard* of Kinmount, Ont., April 1. *Rev. Harry Waite* of Pickering, Ont., April 1.

Deaths: *Rev. Dillwyn T. Evans*, Moderator of the 96th General Assembly, March 18.

Congregationalists also supported the work among fugitive blacks. William King organized one church initiative near Chatham, Ontario, in 1849. Managed by the Elgin Association, the Buxton Mission provided fugitive slaves with land, education and Christian nurture. The Presbyterian Church supported this mission and was responsible for strategic economic initiatives such as a brick factory and a sawmill.

The relationship between blacks and whites in churches became uncomfortable as the black population increased. In *The African Canadian Church: A Stabilizer*, Dorothy Shadd Shreve states: "Before 1840, individual blacks mingled with whites at church services. With the large influx of fugitive slaves in the 1840s and 1850s, it was obvious that white tolerance of social intercourse with their coloured neighbours, even in the presence of God, was strained to the limit." This situation led to the formation of black churches in Upper Canada. The first of these was Salem Chapel in St. Catharines in 1820. About the late 1830s, Jesse Coleman, a fugitive slave from Baltimore, founded the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church.

In addition to the blacks who entered Canada as slaves, fugitives from the

Underground Railway, Loyalists and other free blacks from the Americas, some came from Africa and the Caribbean. Those who were affiliated with the church in their home countries entered Canada seeking a "home church" away from home within their traditional denominations. This created new dynamics within the receiving church. In some cases, blacks were told to seek their own worshipping communities elsewhere. In other cases, the receiving community welcomed the blacks but was unable to embrace the Christian heritage they brought. Many blacks left these congregations in search of communities to meet their spiritual needs. Some decided to remain but attended other church communities in the evenings or afternoons to fill the void. However, many opted to remain, hoping that, with education, fervent prayer and a commitment to hard work, changes would come. **R**

Denise Gillard is pastor of Ferndale Baptist Church, Scarborough, Ont., and Living Hope Community Church Mission, Toronto. While studying at McMaster University, her concern about the absence of the black experience in both church history and the secular history of Canada led her to research and present a paper on the black church in Canada, from which this article is adapted.



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"They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share." 1 TIMOTHY 6:18

With **ONE** in the Real World **FOOT**

by Elaine Nagy

St. Andrew's-Newton in Surrey, British Columbia, is a congregation that is making a difference in its community through a program called "Connections." Connections is a ministry that assists women who have been abused by their partners. St. Andrew's launched it early in 1997 after an extensive period of discernment and educational workshops for members of the congregation.

"Wendy" talks eagerly about the difference Connections has made in her life. When she first participated in the program, she wasn't sure she was entitled to be there. "Society recognizes the physical abuse but not the mental," she says. "The hiding I've been doing for 17 years has sometimes made me feel I'm out of

my mind." Frustrated, she searched hard for something that would help her and her family.

Part of Wendy's search included requesting assistance from her pastor. His well-meaning response was typical of the help the church usually offers. The pastor met with both the husband and wife, trying to be a mediator. But Wendy could not speak freely in front of her husband. All the talking was fine, but it did not accomplish much.

Wendy found out about Connections through a counsellor at a secular community agency. During the 10-week program, she learned about the many different kinds of abuse people inflict as

Helping the disconnected to reconnect

they try to maintain power and control over another person. She learned that physical abuse is not the only kind of abuse that inflicts hurt and damages

relationships. She learned to recognize occurrences of financial, intellectual, social, emotional, spiritual and other kinds of abuse as well. The initial program and the 10-week follow-up program helped her gain a broader perspective of what had been happening to her. "I'm not searching any more," Wendy says. "I've found something that really helps."

Wendy is not alone in her experience. Research shows one in eight women in our society lives in an abusive relationship. It is not surprising, then, that when St. Andrew's-Newton was ready to do something for the community, and do it well, this was an area of ministry they thought they might be able to offer that could allow for real change in people's lives. In the first year, 50 women received direct help through Connections. It is expected the program will continue to assist as many abused women each year.

Karen McAndless-Davis, director of the Connections program, is also minister of St. Andrew's-Newton. She provides individual counselling and makes referrals for women when they first enquire about the program. She also co-facilitates the support groups with a



The Connections Oversight Committee: (left to right) Karen McAndless-Davis, Eleanor Eddy, Kit Pomery (chair), Jim Hayman, Hughina James, Connie Crump.

certified counsellor from the community. The program has been so popular since it was launched in April 1997, many women have had to remain on the waiting list for months. It is the only program in Surrey that offers a "closed" group rather than a "drop-in" group, so the participants get to know each other well. Many of the participants describe loneliness and isolation as being a particularly painful part of their experience. They are especially helped by the new friendships they form in the support group and through the follow-up buddy system.

St. Andrew's-Newton has been enthusiastic about the program from the beginning. There was a tradition in the congregation of providing support to a local women's shelter. Some members of the congregation were also keenly aware of the impact of abuse from having a sister or daughter who had been abused. The congregation has supported Connections by attending workshops about the program, providing baby-sitting and emergency kits, offering practical support

and, in some cases, befriending graduates of the program. The congregation also provided a steering committee that worked hard to find financial resources from within the congregation, from benefactors in the community and from the Experimental Fund of the national Presbyterian Church.

The Connections program has been rewarding not only for the participants but also for the leaders and the congregation. One important feature of the program is the way the leaders create an environment of complete acceptance of each person and her experiences. Women are given an opportunity to understand the differences between healthy relationships and abusive ones, and to recognize how, with an abusive relationship, behaviour is either controlling or a response to the control.

"Jennifer" talks about how relieved she felt by receiving acceptance rather than judgment from the group. "They help you make your own choices," she says. "You don't have to tell your story

if you don't want to." Jennifer also found it helpful to compare her experiences with others and to notice that not everyone in the group had left their abusive partners. Being able to pay for this group counselling on a sliding scale meant a lot to her, too, especially when her income was unstable. "Once I got into it," she says, "I was so grateful."

Karen McAndless-Davis finds it rewarding to interact regularly with police, community agencies and individuals needing help in a way that would never have been possible before the congregation extended its ministry into the community. She speaks with passion about how frequently the designated "helpers" of our society, such as police, health care workers and religious leaders, end up doing the opposite. She explains that when we are silent in the face of abuse or when we suggest the physical or emotional scars of abuse are the victim's own fault, we support the abuser and compound the problem.

Karen's reward comes from the



Connections clients Jodee Lake (left) and Regina Ogmundson share their stories.

women themselves and from being able to raise awareness in the community about the needs of abused women. "The women are wonderful," she says. "I just love them." Karen describes the women who come to Connections as generous and courageous. "The movement they make by the end of 10 weeks is remarkable," she says. "They blossom."


St. Andrew's is careful to offer the program as a service to the community and avoids using it to change people's beliefs or level of commitment to the church. None the less, many of the participants are grateful to the congregation for their support and have found the program life-giving. It is rewarding to see women having such a positive experience in the church.

Helen Pigott, an elder who served on the steering committee that set up Connections, is delighted that, by offering such programs, ordinary people in congregations can be the face of God for someone. Helen knows that an underlying theme in the program is that people

who are being abused do not want the relationship to end; they want the abuse to end. "When you come right down to it, there is nothing more important in life than relationships," she says. "Part of the reward for members of the congregation is that, while there are other programs around to help abused women, this one has the face of God stamped on it."

People in St. Andrew's-Newton are enthusiastic about Connections. Many have become more interested in making commitments to the congregation in a variety of other areas. They are also proud of Karen.

Based on feedback from former clients of Connections, Karen identifies four important criteria for being a good support person to abused women, expressed by the women as: 1) I am believed 100 per cent of the time, 2) Concern for my emotional and physical well-being comes before concern for my partner or the relationship, 3) Confidentiality is maintained, 4) My strengths are emphasized and I feel affirmed.

While participants in the Connections program often have to face the sad reality their partner is not changing, joy is found in seeing the changes women can bring in their own lives. Karen sums up one of the things that keeps her going: "It is neat to see how women have learned to live without fear." 

Elaine Nagy is chaplain to St. Andrew's Hall and is responsible for Presbyterian formation at the Vancouver School of Theology.

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Faces of Faith



Telmor G. Sartison, Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCIC), was born on a farm in Neidpath, Saskatchewan. Until age 12, he lived in Tilley, Alberta, where his father owned and operated a bulk oil and trucking business. He was confirmed in 1950. When he was 14, the family moved to Medicine Hat where he completed high school and studied

piano. In 1955, the family moved to Edmonton where he sold real estate and attended Bible school in Camrose.

Sartison graduated with a BA from the University of Alberta in 1964, then studied at Lutheran Theological Seminary, Saskatoon. He served as a pastor in Saskatchewan and in Calgary. In 1982, he became executive director of the Division of Canadian Mission in the ELCIC. In 1985, he was elected first bishop of the Saskatchewan Synod of the ELCIC. At the July 1993 convention in Vancouver, he was elected Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.

Telmor and Adelene (Moe) Sartison were married in 1959. They have three children and five grandchildren.

What is your earliest memory of church life?

Attending Sunday school in the little United church in small town Tilley, Alberta. My teacher in Sunday school was also my classroom teacher in grades 5 and 6

What is your favourite hymn?

From the older hymns: "O Love That Will Not Let Me Go" and "The Church's One Foundation Is Jesus Christ the Lord." From the newer: Johnny Ylvisakers baptismal hymn "I Was There to Hear Your Bornin' Cry"

What musical piece has most inspired you?

Handel's *Messiah*

What is your favourite biblical book, and why?

There are two: Romans, I appreciate Paul's poetic and human wrestling with sin and grace; and the Psalms, those very human expressions of the human experiences of faith and fear, joy and anger — the whole cross-section

What book (other than the Bible) has most influenced you?

One such book is *Hammer of God* (by retired bishop Bo Giertz), a novel about three generations of Scandinavian families and individuals, and their relationship to the church

Where do you find inspiration to sustain your faith?

In several experiences: prayer, reading, worship with the community called congregation

Who has played a major role in your faith journey?

Gordon Hope, my pastor during high school years; Bob Pearson, dean at the Bible school in Camrose where I attended; President Hordern and the faculty of the seminary. But in a day-to-day basis, it has been Adelene, my wife, and my family — parental and immediate

If you could invite anyone (past or present) to a dinner party, whom would you invite?

John F. Kennedy, because he was president when I was a university student. I was moved by his handling of crises, and the discovery in later years of his foibles and personal difficulties

What is your biggest regret?

I have no overriding regrets. There were missed yeses and noes, but nothing I could say as biggest. At the moment, it would be, for example, that I did not take the vacation offered last year

What is your greatest joy in life?

My family — my own and my children's families. I have enjoyed receiving them and watching them grow and develop. I am comfortable on the floor with my family

What was your most embarrassing moment in church?

When I discovered my zipper was open in an adult class. My son told me

What do you find most irritating about the church?

Most irritating are the "holy wars" that develop around pastors and congregations, sometimes from their histories. These wars segregate congregations and create unwelcoming communities

What one change in the church would make it substantially better?

I think the church could grow substantially in relationships between congregations and in a congregational relationship to its mission by living out the word "hospitality." I believe God has demonstrated hospitality toward us in Christ

If you could live a second time, who would you like to be?

Possibly a general practitioner

Write your own epitaph.

He nurtured community and gave away tasks to people who could do them

Knox College

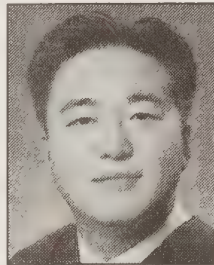
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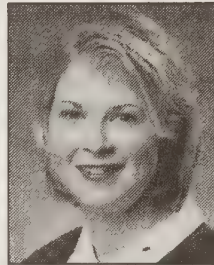
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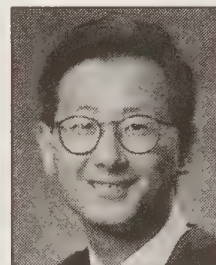
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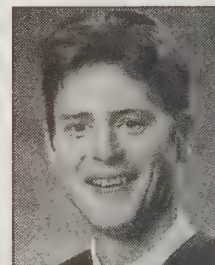
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The graduate's moment of grace

Well, now you've gone and done it, she mutters to herself
As she hangs her framed M.Div., and puts her books up on the shelf.
You could have been a lawyer, a doctor or a nurse
But instead you followed dad — no doubt, a family curse.
You must have lost your marbles, your brain must be at large
How else can you explain that you took a three-point charge?
Then, she glances out the window at the gravestones in the yard
Thinks of those that came before her, ran their race, however hard.
A warm feeling overwhelms her and a smile cracks her face
Thank you, God, she whispers, I think I've found my place.

— T.M.D.

50 YEARS:

The Practice of Human Rights

by Ray Hodgson

Basic human rights — most of us take them for granted. We do not even think about human rights until we hear of cases where they have been violated.

Can someone be brought to trial for violating human rights? The British judiciary is struggling with this question regarding General Augusto Pinochet of Chile. Are states accountable to

The importance of The Universal Declaration of Human Rights for the Church

the international community for their conduct regarding the rights of minorities? The Albanian population of Kosovo cried out for help.

Ten years ago, a lone man captured the imagination of millions. He stood in front of a line of tanks in Tiananmen Square to protest the violation of basic human rights in China. People around the world

were reminded that human rights are considered to be universal. However, this was not always the case. On December 10, 1948, the General Assembly of the United Nations ratified and proclaimed The Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It lists numerous rights — civil, political, economic, social and cultural — to which people everywhere are entitled.

One of the drafters of the Declaration was a Canadian, John Humphrey. A professor of law at McGill University, he was asked to set up the Division for Human Rights in the UN Secretariat. He remained in charge of this division for 20 years. He once said, "The struggle for human rights has always been and always will be a struggle against authority." The Declaration is also important to Canadians because many of its principles are included in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Canada is one of a few states that allows its citizens to complain to the United Nations.

There are 30 articles in the Declaration that outline people's universal rights, including:

- the right to life, liberty and security of person
- the right to education
- freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment
- freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

Because the Declaration is not part of legally binding international law, there are no signatories. But the Declaration is an important instrument of moral and diplomatic pressure on states that violate its principles. While states are permitted to regulate human rights, they are prohibited from violating them.



The United Nations has put mechanisms into place to deal with violations. Through education it seeks to increase awareness of ways the UN can help individuals claim their rights. Special representatives examine and report on conditions in individual countries. They investigate specific complaints brought to the UN by ethnic, political and religious groups.

In 1993, an international conference in Vienna affirmed the rights of women, children and indigenous people as integral components of human rights. The right to development as a basic human right was reaffirmed. Also, at the behest of Canada among others, the post of UN High Commissioner for Human Rights was established in 1994.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is important to Christians. One of the characteristics of Reformed faith is a commitment to witness in the public arena. *Living Faith* states: "God's justice is seen when we deal fairly with each other and strive to change customs and practices that oppress and enslave others. Justice involves protecting the rights of others. It protests against everything that destroys human dignity" (8.4.2,3).

Blending faith and a concern for human rights, Jack McIntosh, one of our missionaries, supported the struggle of Koreans in Japan being treated as second-class people. They were subjected to fingerprinting, unable to become citizens and prevented from participating fully in Japanese society. McIntosh said no to fingerprinting and fought the case in court, finally wearing down the Japanese government. To practise human rights sometimes means acting like the widow in Luke 18:1-5.

Human rights are more than principles. They are practices as well. "For Christians to be involved in the struggle, what is at stake is the very authority of our faith. Because we have

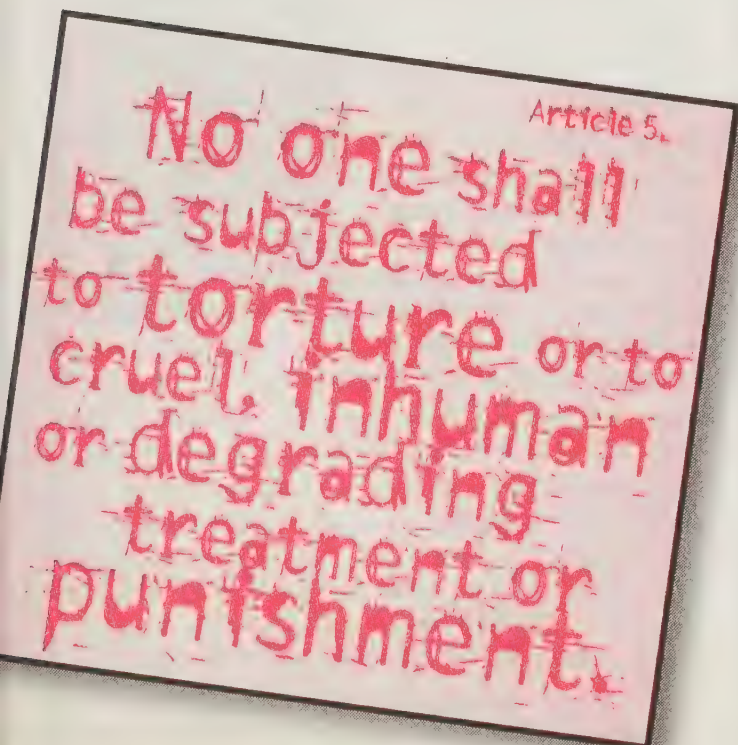


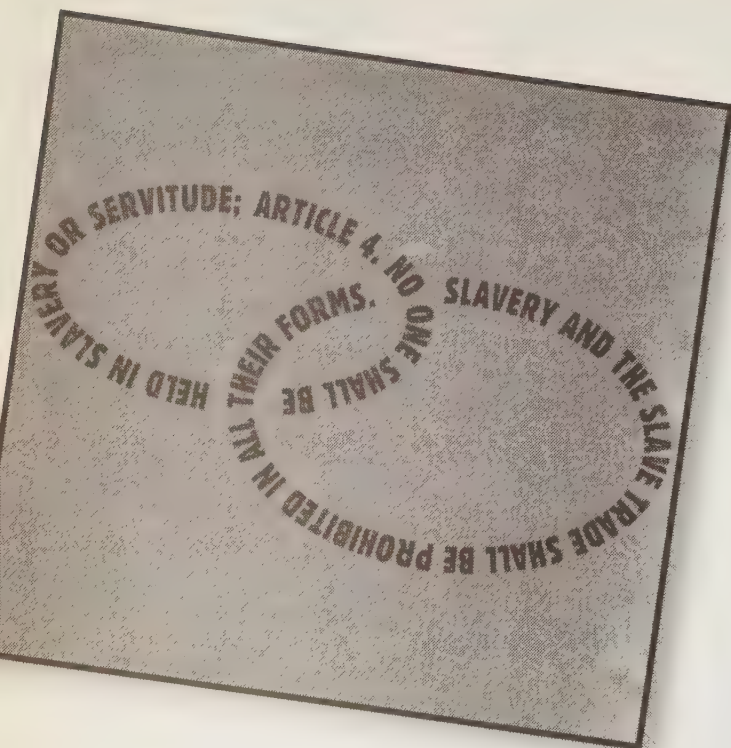
faith, we struggle for human rights and, through our struggle, we witness to our faith" (José Miguez Bonino, a past president of the World Council of Churches). Joe Reed, one of our missionaries in Central America, said no to violence and repression and yes to the poorest of the poor. Standing with others as they seek basic human rights is being light in a darkened world.

Recently, the Presbytery of Waterloo-Wellington sent letters to Sudanese officials regarding the detention and trial of priests in Sudan. The letters specifically mentioned the Republic of Sudan had ratified the Declaration and alluded to several of its articles. The Declaration enabled the presbytery to put forward its concerns in a manner understood by governments and the international community.

Presbyterians support groups seeking to improve human rights in all parts of the globe. But we don't do this simply as individuals or as part of a civil political process. We come to human rights convinced that all are children of God. "Because human beings as individuals, in community, and in humanity are meant to reflect the image of God, all human rights are bound up with and related to one another" (Jurgen Moltmann). Churches approach questions of human rights from the point of view of the victims. Through ecumenical coalitions, Canadian churches bring this point of view to the attention of the governments that gather once a year at the United Nations to review the human rights situation around the world.

Many states today question the universality of all human rights contained in the Declaration. Some states believe trade that will benefit the state's economy allows individual human rights to be set aside. Some states believe individual human rights can be set aside for cultural or religious reasons. Still





others have such a high regard for individual human rights that the rights of groups to self-determination tend to be limited. Even Canada's contemporary response to the Declaration is cloudy.

As we move with hope into the next millennium, individuals and groups can promote basic human rights. The Presbyterian Church in Canada already supports several ecumenical coalitions. Become more familiar with their work and resource materials. The International Affairs Committee reports annually to Assembly. Gather a small group to study the reports and communicate your concerns and actions to the committee. There are other groups, such as Amnesty International and refugee placement groups, that conduct campaigns to help individuals and families.

One of the most important things anyone can do is to exercise the right to ask questions. As you shop, ask questions about where the goods were produced, whether labour conditions are healthy, were fair prices paid to producers, is exploitive child labour used. It's harder to get used to asking questions than it is to find answers. As you listen to or read the news, ask questions about whether people are treated fairly, in Canada and beyond.

The next 50 years will be complex and exciting. As Christians, we are commanded to love our neighbours for the long haul. **R**

Raymond Hodgson, a minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, is a church consultant living in Guelph, Ontario.

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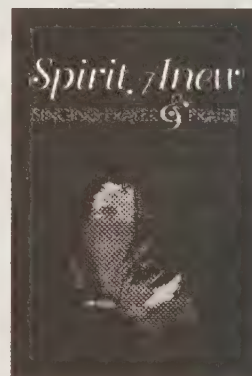
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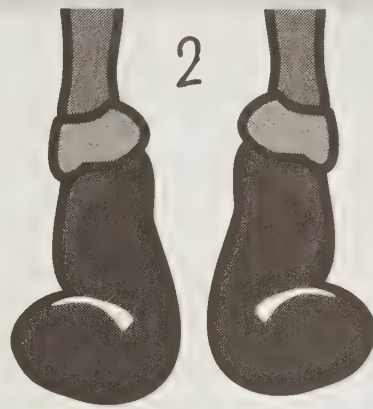
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The Origin, History and Practice of Heel-Popping

by Roland Hunter

Heel-popping: the raising and lowering of the heels while delivering a sermon
(illustrated below)



It has been established that the originator of heel-popping was Bishop Boris of Bulgaria, a noted cleric in the middle of the 18th century. He was a dwarf. Had he not been, heel-popping would likely not have risen either.

As head of a college for missionaries, Bishop Boris addressed students regularly and often. His height (or, rather, lack of it) was such that, when preaching, the top of his head was level with the rim of the pulpit. To maintain eye contact with his congregation, he had to raise and lower himself frequently on tiptoe. This oscillating movement soon earned him the nickname Bouncing Bishop Boris.

Whatever he did, his students wanted to do for he was greatly admired. As a result, the graduating missionary students heel-popped in areas throughout the world to which they were posted. At that time, this included Spuzzum, British Columbia.

Schollberg, a nearby town, was named after Dr. Scholl who, for obvious economic reasons, decided to establish a factory in the vicinity of the campus. One graduate student, Stephan Igor

Slobovsky, heel-popped to extremes. He developed fallen arches to the extent that they fell so far as to disappear completely. He became the worst known case of flat feet since the Middle Ages and spent the rest of his life answering to the name of Shuffling Steve.

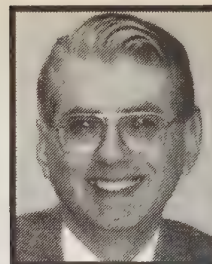
So much for the origin. Here are some other interesting facts. The late Adolf Hitler was one of the most notable heel-poppers. He became known as Heel Hitler. This was later changed to "Heil Hitler" and used as the Nazi Party slogan. In a lighter vein, the Broadway musical play *Hell's a Poppin'* of the late '30s was originally titled *Heel's a Poppin'*. It had an appropriate dance as its main choreographic theme.

The habit of heel-popping is difficult to break, so here are three suggestions as to how this can be done. A bell attached to the back of the collar will remind the wearer each time there is a pop. A low roof fitted above the pulpit and faced with sandpaper or chicken wire provides physical pain (especially if the head is bald) and encouragement to keep the heels flat on the floor all the time.

Probably, the most effective remedy is for a pair of shoes to be nailed to the floor of the pulpit. The preacher would step into them upon arrival for the sermon. Heel-popping is, then, impossible. All that is needed when the sermon is ended is for the preacher to step into the shoes worn earlier. There is a problem, however. In the darkness of the pulpit, so much time may be lost in locating the original shoes, the preacher may be forced to leave the pulpit shoeless and to give the benediction standing in his socks.

There is an important guideline for lay readers who become addicted to the art of heel-popping. The height of each pop should be rigidly controlled: about one inch to 1 1/2 inches is recommended. Over-enthusiasm in, say, a pop of four inches can be disastrous. The reader may lose his balance, pitch forward and end up spread-eagled over the lectern. **R**

Roland Hunter is a businessman in West Vancouver and the inventor of the Single Octave Toilet Plunger. He has been a professional actor in radio, television and film for many years, mainly with the CBC and on stage.



Removing the Barriers to Mutual Consultation

I have read periodically about church procedures, including the Barrier Act. What is it? How does it work?

The so-called Barrier Act is the legislative tool by which The Presbyterian Church in Canada makes changes to its doctrine or to the Book of Forms, the agreed-upon rules by which the church governs itself. Any such changes need to go through a carefully designed process of mutual consultation involving all the presbyteries. This process is called the Barrier Act, an act originally passed in 1697 by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and incorporated in the constitution of The Presbyterian Church in Canada by the Basis of Union of 1875.

How does it work?

Let me use a somewhat outrageous example. Many people within our church know very little, if anything at all, about the Westminster Confession of Faith. Indeed, perhaps even some of our clergy are not well-acquainted with it and some who are do not particularly care for its 17th-century theology. Yet, that Confession remains part of the "subordinate standards" of The Presbyterian Church in Canada — standards subordinate, or secondary, to the witness of Scripture. It forms an integral part of the "Basis of Union" which created this denomination in 1875. (You will find that document in Chapter X, page 71 of the Book of Forms.) All office-bearers in the church are required to answer the question, "Do you accept the subordinate standards of this Church, promising to uphold its doctrine under the continual illumination and correction of the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scriptures?"

Let us now suppose that, upon one or more overtures (requests) from presbyteries to General Assembly, a movement

to remove the Westminster Confession as one of the subordinate standards of the church has taken hold, with many people thinking it an idea whose time has come. So, one would think that the Assembly to which this request is addressed, being the highest court of the church, could, after due deliberation and by majority vote, decide to drop the Confession as a subordinate standard. Thus the "Basis of Union" is changed, as is the theological and legal constitution of the church.

Well, not so fast. Would that be fair? Would such an action reflect the genius

**On matters of adding to,
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fullest possible consultation
with all those affected**

of this church, which is that we act together *after due consultation*? Obviously not. Such an action by Assembly would be autocratic and ignore the voice of all the sessions and presbyteries.

Hence, the Barrier Act. It is a legislative device that says, before the fundamental constitution or doctrine of the church is changed, presbyteries need to state clearly whether they approve or disapprove of such an act. And, so, the decision of one Assembly to dispose of the Westminster Confession as a subordinate standard of the church must be "remitted" for approval or disapproval to all the presbyteries for a final decision by the subsequent General Assembly.

Note, however, that when such legislation (called a remit) comes before the presbytery, it cannot make any amendments (changes) to the proposed legislation. All the presbytery can answer is "Yes, we agree" or "No, we disagree."

Some of you will say: "But is that fair? On a weighty matter, such as deleting the Westminster Confession of Faith from the constitution of the church, should there not be possibilities for amendments and should not time be given for at least the sessions to be consulted also?"

If you asked that question, then you have "caught" what, in my view, the Barrier Act is all about, both in its spirit and its substance. I am profoundly convinced — and I thank God I am not alone — that, on matters of adding to, deleting, or amending any part of the polity or doctrine of the church, there must be the fullest possible consultation with all those affected. In our system of church government, this means, at the very least, sessions and presbyteries should be given opportunity to study and reflect on these matters and to be partners in the drafting of the legislation. They should not be confronted with having to say "yes" or "no" to any proposed legislation without first having had the opportunity to reflect thoughtfully and prayerfully on its consequences and ramifications and, possibly, to amend it. Of course, such a process takes time; but, on weighty matters, it is time well worth the taking. Poorly drafted legislation or the circumventing of the process, however well-intentioned, has a tendency to come back to haunt us all in future years.

Although it is my opinion that, in recent years, the General Assembly has, on occasion, ignored the spirit if not the letter of the Barrier Act, we mostly hold to that spirit of mutual consultation which is one of the strengths of the polity of our denomination. ■

Please send questions for Rev. Tony Plomp to: e-mail TONY_PLOMP@bc.sympatico.ca or 4020 Lancelot Dr., Richmond, B.C. V7C 4S3.



A Questioning Voice

At General Assembly a few years ago, the Knox College representative was a Tutsi from Rwanda who had immigrated to Canada. He spoke about the massacres and ethnic cleansing in Rwanda. The church and international community stood back as most of his family and friends were killed. "Where was the church?" he asked. "Why did it stay silent?"

The church couldn't do much after the fact. And I'm not sure The Presbyterian Church in Canada could have had much impact even while the killings were going on. But many of us at Assembly were left feeling that we could have tried to do more.

Ethnic cleansing, wholesale massacres, forced migration — terrible stuff. As I write, the situation in Kosovo is getting worse, and more complicated. The international community hasn't stood by; but I'm not sure it has helped much either.

I'm struggling with believing what I'm told. The newspapers show awful pictures of fields of refugees and list appalling statistics about people killed, people missing, people driven from their homes. The words "ethnic cleansing" and "extreme racism" are used, and links to the Holocaust are made. The world should do anything it can to stop such evil.

At the same time, I am hesitant. I know only what the newspapers and television tell me — and they usually don't tell me Milosevic's side of the story. Only on the back pages of some editorial sections are dissenting voices raised — and these usually question the methods or strategies used by NATO forces rather than the conflict itself. I do not trust the simplicity of the images and arguments I am given; complexity seems to be a bad word to mainstream editors.

You have to go to the Internet or to the far left radical press to find any ser-

ious questioning of the Kosovo conflict. These media raise questions the mainstream media usually avoid. Why, for example, is Kosovo such a big deal when Rwanda and Indonesia barely made page 6? Why has NATO not interfered in other ethnic disputes and oppressions until now? What interests are at stake for the United States in this conflict? Why are we using air strikes that didn't work in the Second World War, Vietnam or the Gulf and, probably, will not work now? Whose interests are served by intensifying the conflict and polarizing opinions (which air strikes likely do)?

To my knowledge, no totalitarian or oppressive regime has ever been toppled by air strikes from an outside force. The major revolutions against oppressive governments in the 20th century have been carried out using peaceful methods: Gandhi in India, the fall of the Berlin Wall and the peaceful revolutions of Eastern Europe at the beginning of this decade, South Africa and Martin Luther King Jr. in the United States.

The church probably could not have stopped the horrors in Rwanda. It cannot do much more than send aid to the victims of the conflict in Kosovo. We can send money to Presbyterian World Service and Development and we can send international observers to help the United Nations. I doubt we can stop the conflict.

But I think The Presbyterian Church in Canada, with other churches, has a major role to play on a global level as a questioning voice for the rest of the world. In a meeting with Prime Minister Chrétien and Lloyd Axworthy, minister

of foreign affairs, for example, leaders of seven member churches of the Canadian Council of Churches (including the Presbyterian Church) appealed to the Canadian government to "press for an immediate, unilateral moratorium on the NATO bombing campaign." We can —

To my knowledge, no totalitarian or oppressive regime has ever been toppled by air strikes from an outside force

for ourselves and publicly — refuse to accept simple answers or simple explanations. We can keep reasserting and exploring the complexity of the issues involved. Moreover, we can insist on noticing conflicts and oppressions that are not popular, do not make headline news, do not involve the interests of Canada or the United

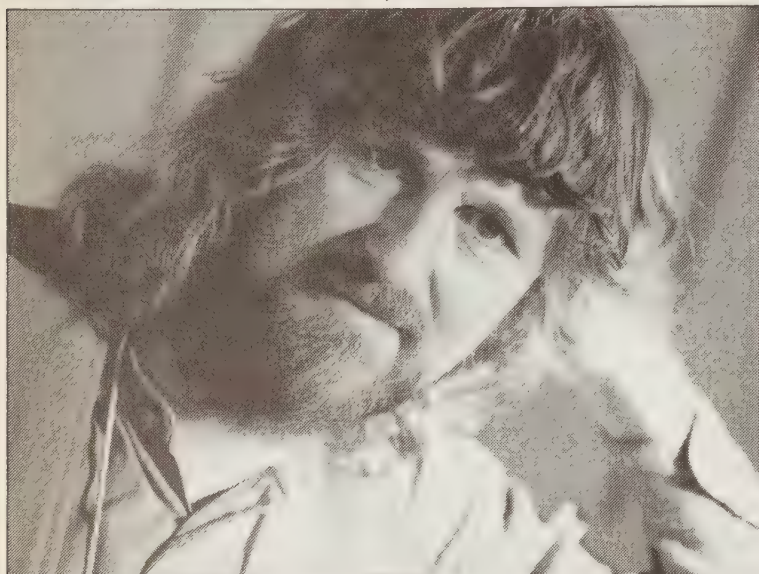
States and, hence, are ignored. We can also promote peaceful methods of conflict resolution. Bombing a country to rubble rarely solves anything; it may create a situation worse than the one that began.

I wonder what Prime Minister Chrétien would do if every Presbyterian youth group, or every Christian youth group, in Canada sent a letter asking him to consider other methods of solving the problem in Kosovo? Think what Presbyterian World Service and Development could do if it were supported not only by money but by working in conjunction with Justice Ministries fully supported by letters, petitions and signatures from every person and every congregation in the Presbyterian Church. **R**

Kathy Cawsey, a member of Knox Church, Waterloo, Ont., is studying at Oxford University. Write to Kathy at: Middle Common Room, Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, England OX2 6QA; by e-mail at: kathleen.cawsey@lmh.ox.ac.uk.

PCC News

For whom the Bell toils: John Bell to receive E. H. Johnson Award



Rev. John L. Bell, recipient of the 1999 E. H. Johnson Award.

John L. Bell, a minister of the Church of Scotland, is the 1999 recipient of the E. H. Johnson Award for "achievement on the cutting edge of mission." He will receive the award on behalf of the Iona Community at the 125th General Assembly taking place this month in Kitchener, Ontario.

John Bell embodies and represents the achievements of the Iona Community in its maturity. Ordained in 1978 as regional youth adviser for the Church of Scotland, he transferred in 1984 to the Iona Community where he served as youth coordinator and initiated a program of vocational training for young people committed to working in the inner city. One outcome of this work was the formation of the Wildgoose Worship Group, an association of 18 people who develop

strategies and materials for public worship. With his colleagues, Bell has produced 10 collections of original hymns and songs, two collections of

songs from the world Church, and several collections of prayers and worship material, much of it developed through engagement with those on the periphery of the church. Through his leadership of Wildgoose Publications, the Iona Community has developed worship and liturgical resources on the cutting edge of urban mission.

Bell has definite affinities with some of his remote monastic predecessors at Iona. Described by a Glasgow acquaintance as "one who travels through the world lightly," Bell is unmarried and does not possess a camera, cell phone, colour television, computer or driver's licence. He devotes much of his time to travelling the world and leading workshops on church liturgy and music.

A prolific composer, Bell has con-

tributed a dozen hymns to the 1997 *Book of Praise*, among them the ringing call to mission "Will You Come and Follow Me?" The suggested music for the hymn, *Kelvingrove*, is also the name of a beautiful park in central Glasgow. The placing of the mission of the church and Christians in the heart of the city is surely no accident. (Compiled from an article by Duncan Jeffrey)

As we forgive our debtors

At the final tally on May 6, 7,230 Presbyterians had added their signatures to Jubilee petitions calling for the forgiveness of debts held by Third World countries. The signatures came from congregations, WMS groups, youth groups, presbytery committees and individuals. One hundred and eighty-eight congregations (more than 10 per cent of congregations in the PCC) participated in the project.

The 7,230 names were part of 615,000 collected from across Canada. The petitions were presented to the federal government on May 11; from there, they are to be sent to Germany for the presentation of petitions from around the world to the Group of Eight meeting on June 19.

The Jubilee campaign has already had a significant effect. Britain, France, Germany, the United States and Canada have all made announcements on revised policies for dealing with highly indebted countries. The Canadian position has received a positive analysis from the Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative (CEJI). The CEJI analysis is available from Andrew Kerr of the *Celebrate!* Committee, Justice Ministries and on the Jubilee Web site www.web.net/~jubilee.

Preparations are under way for Year 2 of the campaign under the theme "Redistribution of Wealth."

Refugees from Kosovo: a call for sponsors

Congregations of The Presbyterian Church in Canada are called upon to offer sponsorships to refugees from Kosovo. These are joint assistance sponsorships in which the federal government provides financial assistance and the sponsoring group provides the necessary settlement assistance and orientation. The tasks would include finding suitable permanent accommodation, orienting and registering refugees for basic services, identifying appropriate counselling if needed, and befriending. Groups must be willing to offer up to 24 months of logistical support. For more information or if your congregation is interested in sponsoring a refugee family from Kosovo, please call Presbyterian World Service and Development at 1-800-619-7301, ext. 244.

Record receives four CCP awards

The *Presbyterian Record* was the winner of four 1998 Canadian Church Press (CCP) awards, garnering one first prize and three honourable mentions. The awards were presented at the CCP annual convention, held at Crieff Hills Community, Puslinch, Ontario, April 8-10, 1999.

Proving, yet again, to the rest of the world that Presbyterians *do* have a sense of humour, the *Record* received first prize for Original Written Humour for the May 1998 epistle of Peter Plymley II detailing the unique atmosphere of church basements. "There are no false steps here," the judges wrote about the column. "It is the unerring observation (and celebration) of detail that makes the article so much fun to read."

"Another Fish Story" by Joan Bond (October 1998) received an honourable

mention in Poetry for its "imaginative retelling of the Jonah story, carefully crafted in earthy, specific images."

Sabrina Caldwell's article "Who's There?" (April 1998) received an honourable mention in Narrative Fiction/Non-Fiction, and was praised for the way it captures "extremely well" the "day-to-day minutiae of raising children."

"The Scattered Frost" by Tom Dickey (March 1998) was awarded an honourable mention for Treatment of a News Event. "This entry has many fine qualities [and] stylish writing touches," commented the judges.

Even in defeat, *Record* contributors received praise. For example, it may interest some readers to know that the judges in the Best Column category consider the *Record* "most fortunate" to have Kathy Cawsey as a regular columnist.



Aid for Kosovo

Rev. Drew Jacques (left) and Rev. Dwight Nelson stand in front of the second of three shipments of care packs gathered for shipment to Albania. The relief effort centred in the Presbytery of East Toronto, Strathroy, North Bay, New Liskeard, Englehart, Tomstown and Kapuskasing, Ontario. Each pack contains personal items such as soap and vitamins, plus toys, crayons and other things for children. The total value of the care packs exceeded \$100,000. The entire load was shipped in May in conjunction with Presbyterian World Service and Development and the Canadian Albanian Relief Effort.

Pictures of Jesus

The *Record* is looking for pictures of Jesus to go with its series "Who Is Jesus?" which begins in Advent 1999. Do you have a suggestion or something original we could consider? Please let us know: Pictures of Jesus, *Presbyterian Record*, 50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, Ont. M3C 1J7.



Concordia
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Seeking University Chaplain

The Campus Ministry of Concordia University, Montreal, is seeking to fill the full-time position of Ecumenical Chaplain.

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- Pastoral counselling and liturgical experience are assets
- French language ability

Interested applicants must submit an up-to-date résumé with a covering letter, including two recent references by June 15, 1999. Send the application to: Ms. Daryl Lynn Ross, Coordinator, Concordia University Campus Ministry, 7141 Sherbrooke St. West, Montreal, QC H4A 2Y5.

For information, call the above at (514) 848-3585 or e-mail daryllyn@vax2.concordia.ca

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St. Laurent, Quebec H4L 1K5
Tel. (514) 747-3618
E-mail: james-f-douglas@hotmail.com

Congregation sets out on new venture in health care

About two years ago, Diane Petrie of Knox Church, Goderich, Ontario, felt a call to parish nursing. After doing some research, she talked with the ministers and members of the congregation who were also interested. Realizing they had a lot to learn, a committee was formed to prepare the way for a health ministry at Knox.

One of the first issues faced in establishing a parish nursing ministry is funding. The congregation obtained a small grant from the Experimental Fund to purchase resources. The Presbytery of Huron-Perth and the Registered Nurses Association of Ontario provided the money for Diane to take a course in parish nurse preparation. Finally, the Perth-Huron branch of the Victorian Order of Nurses (VON) agreed to form a working partnership for a three-year demonstration project, providing both financial and professional support.

By January 1999, the congregation of Knox was ready to begin its new venture. A service of dedication for the health ministry was held and Petrie was commissioned as parish nurse.

Petrie is providing new services to the

congregation and community. The first is the provision of health counselling for individuals and families with the goal of helping them cope with various health conditions and life transitions. People come to her with many concerns, including family relationships, parenting issues, how to manage long-term illness, decisions about nursing homes and palliative care. Petrie also links people to other services through referrals and advocacy, and works with support groups for caregivers.

Parish nurse Diane Petrie (standing) talks with Judy Pettey, Joyce Thorne and David Thorne at the Caring Visitor workshop.



Loneliness and isolation are conditions that often lead to poor health. To minimize their effect, "caring visitors" are being trained for lay pastoral ministry. Twenty-five people participated in a workshop in March and a second workshop was scheduled for May.

In order to serve the health concerns of the congregation, a brief survey is planned. The health education program will be based on the survey's results. In addition, three health education events will be held each year.

Stewards by Design

On April 23-26, Presbyterians from across the country met in Guelph, Ontario, to talk about that thorny subject — money. One minister probably expressed the thoughts of many when he said he would rather have a root canal than preach about money. Yet, 26 congregational teams spent three days exploring the relationship between faith and money, and managed to have a good time in the process.

The success of the conference can be attributed to a number of factors. Prominent among them was the insistence of the planning committee that each participating congregation send a team of four people rather than only the minister. Not only did this help in the discussion and planning process during the weekend, but it is bound to help any implementation in the life of the congrega-

tion. Secondly, it was acknowledged that no one stewardship plan can meet all the needs of diverse congregations, thus giving congregations the freedom to develop their own plan of action. Thirdly, teams were required to do advance reading and preparation. Throughout the conference, participants had the opportunity to listen to guest speakers as well as to each other and then to develop a plan of action to meet their congregation's needs. Each congregation was encouraged to think of another congregation within its presbytery with which it could share the insights gained from the weekend.

Participants discussed the god-like power money can have over our lives and, because of that, how easy it is to turn it into a form of idolatry. They also talked about the secrecy surrounding money in the church and the power

such secrecy gives to money. Interesting questions were raised, such as, should the minister know how much members give and should taxes be seen as part of stewardship.

Worship added an important vitality to the conference. Led by Rev. Herb Gale, participants were encouraged not only to think about planned giving, but also to consider their own lives as planned gifts from God for the sake of those around them.

Congregational teams will continue to report to the planning committee over the next three years to avoid, as one delegate put it, "short-term passion for long-term neglect." It was suggested that another "Stewards by Design" conference be held to give more congregations the opportunity to explore the relationship between faith and giving. *(From a report by Dale Woods)*

Armagh continues to be a shelter from the storm



Facilities manager Eileen Lee (left) and Sheila Northover, co-ordinator of volunteer services, make sure Christmas is a joyful time at Armagh.

Armagh, a second-stage home in Mississauga, Ontario, supported by The Presbyterian Church in Canada, continues to provide a safe and affordable haven for abused women and their children. That was the message Sheila Northover, co-ordinator of volunteer services for Armagh, brought to the women of Clarkson Road Church, Mississauga, during a recent coffee hour.

When Armagh welcomed its first residents on March 15, 1991, it was one of

only six second-stage homes in Ontario. Today, there are more than 20. Women are referred to Armagh from local crisis centres and other community agencies. Rent is geared to income, and residents may stay for up to six months. The average stay is four months.

At Armagh, women and children are given the best possible chance to overcome the devastating effects of abuse, to deal with the past, to address the present and to plan for the future.

Congregation hopes its church is on the move

The congregation of Riverside Church, Prince William, New Brunswick, is hoping its church building will soon be on the move. Built shortly after the Union of 1925, the church served the community of Prince William for three generations. Unfortunately, the church fell victim to another trend — the move of people from the country to the city. Today, Riverside is largely unused.

The congregation, made up of descendants of the original 21 people who formed the church in 1926, are not prepared to abandon their building. They have offered it to the Kings Landing Historical Settlement, and Kings Landing is enthusiastic about obtaining the church.

"The Riverside Church will not only tell the story of the contribution of Presbyterians to New Brunswick's history, but it

will also symbolize the emotion of the late Victorian movement to unite Protestant denominations in Canada," says Robert Dallison, director of Kings Landing.

But, while the church has been offered to Kings Landing and the museum is anxious to have it join its more than 100 other historical buildings, the difficulty with moving the church stretches beyond the nine kilometres separating the two sites. The cost of the project is well beyond the congregation's and Kings Landing's ability to fund.

Financial assistance is needed. Donations to preserve the Riverside Presbyterian Church can be sent to Kings Landing, Unit 2 Kings Landing Road, Kings Landing Historical Settlement, N.B. E6K 3W3. Income tax receipts will be issued. (From an article by Lynn Thornton)

News Scan

Buying back slaves not the solution, says UNICEF

Buying back slaves from their captors does not address the problem of slavery in Southern Sudan, says Carol Bellamy, executive director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). While she concedes those involved in paying for the retrieval of slaves are well-intentioned, Bellamy says "the sobering truth is that these efforts will not end the enslavement of human beings." Instead, she calls for support in persuading the warring factions in Sudan to stop the armed conflict. Until the root problems behind the 16-year-old civil war in Sudan and its "by-products of criminality" are addressed, there can be no lasting solution, she says. (*All Africa News Agency*)

Pope hits top of pops (PCC Moderator rumoured to be in recording studio)

Sony Music has shipped one million copies of Pope John Paul II's album *Abba Pater*. The first music album ever recorded by a pope went on sale in March and has quickly become a heavy seller in Roman Catholic countries. Released to honour the 20th anniversary of John Paul II's papacy and the Roman Catholic Church's upcoming 2,000th birthday, *Abba Pater* mixes existing recordings of the Pope's voice with a gentle New Age score (with some hip-hop influences) by young Italian composer Leonardo de Amicis. (*The Globe and Mail*)

Seldom used, in excellent condition

More than three years after the mysterious disappearance of Madalyn Murray O'Hair, the United States' most famous atheist, a Bible given to her by a group of Oklahoma school-girls sold at an auction for \$2,000.

Knox Presbyterian Church Summer Fellowship 1999

Theme: "The Church in
the Third Millennium"

June 16: **William McRae**

Tyndale College and Seminary, Toronto

Serving Our Generation: Boomers, Builders and Busters
(1 Chronicles 12:32)

June 23: **Jeremy Begbie**

Ridley Hall, Cambridge University, England

Sounding Hopeful: Biblical Hope Through Music and the Arts
(Romans 8:17-25)

June 30: **James Boice**

Tenth Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia

Reformation and Renewal in a Postmodern World (Acts 2:42-47)

July 7: **Donald Carson**

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield

*A Peculiar People: The Identity of the Church
in a Neo-Pagan World* (1 Peter 2:4-12)

July 14 **Dennis Ngien**

Tyndale College and Seminary, Toronto

*Building Gospel Bridges: Speaking About Jesus
in a Post-Christian Culture* (Acts 17:16-34)

July 21: **Robert Norris**

Fourth Presbyterian Church, Washington

*Salt and Light: When God's People Make a Difference
in Their World* (Matthew 5:13-16)

July 28: **Mariano Di Gangi**

Knox Presbyterian Church, Toronto

Worship in Time and Space (John 4:19-26)

August 4: **Joel Nederhood**

Faith 20, Chicago

Shaking Things Up: When God's People Pray (Acts 4:23-31)

August 11: **Glenn Smith**

Christian Direction, Montreal

For God So Loved the City: On Being An Urban Christian
(Philemon)

August 18: **Charles Nienkirchen**

Rocky Mountain College, Calgary

A Call to Pilgrimage: The Church as a Journeying People
(Psalm 84)

August 25: **Nigel Cameron**

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield

Should the Lord Tarry: The People of God in the Last Days
(2 Peter 3:1-18)

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NEWS

Other News

PC meets PM

PPrime Minister Jean Chrétien and External Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy met with representatives of the Canadian Council of Churches, including Stephen Kendall, principal clerk of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, on April 15.

The prime minister granted the meeting — the first with church leaders in 16 years — in response to requests to discuss nuclear disarmament, which is the subject of a report of the standing committee on foreign affairs, "Canada and the Nuclear Challenge." The government was expected to respond to the report in the House of Commons.

The meeting took place prior to the NATO summit in Washington, April 22-25. The delegation urged the prime minister to press for a review of NATO's policy of support for nuclear weapons, and affirmed the recommendations of the standing committee, which includes the devaluation of nuclear weaponry and de-alerting of nuclear member states. The delegation went further than the standing committee's report in calling also for a "no first use" policy.

The tragic events of the Kosovo crisis also led the delegation to press for a unilateral moratorium on the NATO bombing campaign. "While we recognize there is no easy solution to the crisis, we are convinced continued bombing is not the way to bring peace," Kendall said.

The delegation took the opportunity to applaud the prime minister and his government for the leadership taken with respect to the landmine treaty, small-arms control, world climate-change initiatives, and many examples of diplomatic and humanitarian efforts. "We offered our support for any form of strong leadership that places human security high on the political agenda," said Kendall.

In turn, Prime Minister Chrétien praised the efforts of churches and all Canadians in responding generously to the refugee crisis in Kosovo, both in the region itself and here in Canada.

Though not on the delegation's agenda, the Jubilee 2000 campaign for debt relief — "a world-wide ecumenical initiative for which our government's positive action will be appreciated" — was also brought to the prime minister's attention.

The delegation met as well with Svend Robinson and members of the New Democratic Party, Bloc Québécois leader Gilles Duceppe, and former UN ambassador for disarmament Senator Douglas Roche. A scheduled meeting with Reform Party leader Preston Manning had to be cancelled due to time constraints. According to Kendall, in all the meetings there was interest and an expressed willingness to seek ways to involve civil society in creative and constructive ways to help avert world crises.

(Further details on the content of the churches' position can be found on the Web sites of the Canadian Council of Churches and Project Ploughshares, or through the General Assembly Office of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.)

Kirk to look at baptism option

A new Church of Scotland report on infant baptism suggests the Kirk look at recognizing a service of thanksgiving as an alternative. The report is the result of a working party set up two years ago by the church and was to be part of the Board of National Mission report to the Church of Scotland's General Assembly held May 8-14 in Edinburgh. The report points out that even though there has been a decline in church-going over the past 35 years, one in five babies born in Scotland is baptized by either the Kirk or the Roman Catholic Church.

Under the Baptismal Act of the General Assembly (1963), the faith of the parents is included in the grounds for baptism. However, the report states there is great inconsistency in how the act is applied. In some areas, parents can have their babies baptized without having to attend church, while in others one parent must be a full communicant member.

The report highlights particular problems about baptism and the provisions of the act in housing schemes, inner cities, hospitals and the armed forces. Chaplains to the armed forces said moving around due to work commitments meant parents could not offer the pattern of consistent church-going called for by the act. The report also finds congregations sometimes give little attention to following up families after baptisms.

If, as the board recommends, the report goes on to the panel of doctrine, the Assembly may move to introduce official services of thanksgiving which have already appeared in 10 per cent of parishes. (*The Scotsman*)

Surfing the Web?

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www.presbycan.ca/record



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ArithmeCode by Dave Mitchell

Find the value of each symbol by doing the arithmetic. Replace each symbol with the letter which corresponds to its value to find the *ArithmeCode* word below. Category: PAUL SHIPWRECKED

- i $96 - 37 - 28 - 11 = \blacksquare$
 ii $(6/5 \text{ of } \blacksquare) \div (\blacksquare - 18) = \bullet$
 iii $(\bullet \div \blacksquare) + (\blacksquare \div 50) = \blacklozenge$
 iv $\blacklozenge \times (\blacksquare - \bullet - 7) = \square$
 v $(20\% \text{ of } \blacksquare) + (5/6 \text{ of } \bullet) - \square = \blacklozenge$

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z		
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	

The *ArithmeCode* word is:



ArithmeCode answer from last issue: NAOMI

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Congregations Swing Into Action

An increasing number of congregational *Celebrate!* committees report plans for the year 2000.

Parkwood Church in Nepean, Ontario, plans three projects. Its Celebration Committee will play a major role in launching the Logos program, a ministry with youth as well as children and their families. They also plan to develop a slide presentation on the history of Parkwood Church and to team up with and visit Greenview Church in Nepean.

The Celebration 2000 Committee at St. John's Church, Medicine Hat, Alberta, plans to mark the International Year of Older Persons by presenting nominees with a certificate recognizing their years of volunteerism at St. John's and in the community.

Erindale Church in Mississauga, Ontario, has ambitious plans for the year 2000. These include launching their celebrations this year at a joint service with the congregation that originally occupied the building. Each month of the year 2000, they will emphasize one aspect of the FLAMES initiative. This includes helping with Mississauga's Out of the Cold program, emphasizing the Jubilee theme and assisting with a project at Armagh. The year will conclude with a celebration of the congregation's 40th anniversary.

On May 15, the Presbytery of Halifax and Lunenburg met at Camp Geddie and the Presbytery of Pictou met in Westville, Nova Scotia, for workshops on the Jubilee theme.

The senior choir at Hopedale Church in Oakville, Ontario, will launch celebrations with two concerts, one including favourite hymns requested by the congregation. Proceeds from this concert will be used to improve the church parlour.

All groups at St. Andrew's Church, Pictou, Nova Scotia, have been challenged to devise a *Celebrate!* project with \$125 start-up money and contribute the proceeds to projects at home and internationally.

Presbytery Initiatives

The Presbytery of Waterloo-Wellington is donating \$125,000 to local and international missions in 1999 and 2000. Fifty thousand dollars has been given to Glen Mhor Camp's new septic system. Another \$50,000 is expected to support Habitat for Humanity and \$25,000 is planned for a project in the developing world.

David Brearley is writing a history called *The Growth of Presbyterianism in Ottawa*. Anyone with information, documents or photographs about congregations in the Ottawa area is asked to contact David at (613) 731-8373 or e-mail breco@capitalnet.com. The presbytery also plans a poetry and essay contest for children. A presbytery rally to celebrate the past, present and future will be held in St. Paul's Church, Ottawa, on October 17, 1999.

Millennial Tours

With summer coming, many are planning holidays. This is a good year to consider taking a historic churches tour. The *Celebrate!* Committee has prepared booklets outlining tours of historic sites associated with The Presbyterian Church in Canada. There are separate booklets for Atlantic Canada, Quebec, Ontario and Western Canada. They include information regarding church buildings, historic markers and other sites of a historical nature. These guides are available free from: *Celebrate!* Office, 50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, Ont. M3C 1J7.

Vision 2000

First Church in Collingwood, Ontario, held workshops in October, April and May to initiate plans to celebrate the close of the millennium and to commit itself to further God's work in the new millennium. Sixty people representing 12 groups in the congregation met initially to generate ideas, seek common ground in setting priorities and begin to structure a process to move forward. Of the 48 ideas suggested, eight were selected: updating the history of the church, summer fellowship barbecues, an expanded visitation program, a community blitz to deliver brochures welcoming people to the church, sending a large group of teens to the Canada Youth 2000 conference, cell group development to meet the diverse interests and needs of the congregation, production of a Passion play, an Easter sunrise service, and support for a local March for Jesus.

Banners

International Ministries hopes to collect 125 banners (one for each year of our church's history) to present to overseas churches during 2000. Groups and congregations are invited to make these banners which will carry a message of love and

shared faith to partner churches. For details, contact: International Ministries, 50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, Ont. M3C 1J7.

Funding for Projects

Grants or matching grants may be available for your project. Here are some government sources:

British Columbia 2000:

(250) 356-2000

or visit the Web site

www.BC2000.gov.bc.ca

Millennium Vancouver 2000:

(604) 878-7400

or visit the Web site

www.vancouver2000.bc.ca

Alberta 2000: (780) 415-2000

or visit the Web site

www.alberta2000.gov.ab.ca

Calgary 2000: (403) 268-2000

or visit the Web site

www.intervisual.com/calgary2000

Edmonton 2000: (780) 496-8200

or visit the Web site www.gov.edmonton.ab.ca/millennium2000

Saskatchewan 2000: (306) 787-2005,

e-mail celebrate@sk.sympatico.ca

or visit the Web site

www.celebratingsask.com

Manitoba 2000: (204) 945-2000 or

e-mail Manitoba2000@chc.gov.mb.ca

Winnipeg Millennium Council:

(204) 925-8740

or visit the Web site

www.winnipeg2000.com

Ontario 2000: 1-877-464-0444

or visit the Web site

www.ontario2000.on.ca

Ottawa 2000: (613) 560-2000

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www.ottawa2000.org

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fax (514) 872-3124

or visit the Web site www.ville.montreal.qc.ca/indexanim.htm

New Brunswick 2000:

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www.nb2000.gov.nb.ca

For more detailed information about these or other programs, contact the *Celebrate!* office at 1-800-619-7301 Ext. 324 or e-mail akerr@presbyterian.ca. **R**



Guideposts

Celebrating Our Heritage

Election of First Moderator of The Presbyterian Church in Canada



Photo courtesy of United Church Archives

Rev. John Cook, minister of St. Andrew's, Quebec City, and principal of Morin College, chosen Moderator of the first General Assembly, June 1875.

The Assembly then proceeded to the election of a moderator, and Rev. Mr. McGregor called for nominations.

Rev. Dr. Taylor, Montreal, said in carrying out the order of this meeting the honour had been assigned him of nominating a Moderator of this great Assembly, and he begged to suggest the name of the Rev. John Cook, D.D., Principal of Morin College, Quebec, (great applause) for this honourable and important position. He felt it was only necessary to mention his name to secure his unanimous election. He might refer both to public and personal considerations in support of this nomination, to the fact that Dr. Cook had laboured in the service of the Church for 40 years in this Province of Quebec, and during the whole of that time had occupied a distinguished place amongst the preachers of the Gospel (cheers), not only in his own denomination but in all the others. He might also refer to the service which Dr. Cook had rendered in connection with the negotiations for union. He had laboured zealously, earnestly and perseveringly in this good work, and if we had not enjoyed his assistance — the weight and influence of his name, — he questioned very much whether this union would have been so soon and so happily consummated as it had. (Cheers). He did not refer merely to the services which he had rendered in the cause of union in this country, but would include also the very eminent services which he had rendered in the fatherland on the floor of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. (Applause). He had known him personally for a number of years and considered that he had always done credit to the position which, in the providence of God, he occupied in the Church.

Rev. Dr. Bayne, Pictou, N.S., seconded the nomination, remarking that he had every reason to believe it would commend itself to every member of this assembly.

The motion was put by Rev. Mr. McGregor and carried unanimously.

Rev. Dr. Cook, attired in his ministerial gown, took his seat in the Moderator's chair being greeted with loud cheers.

— from *The Presbyterian*, July 1875

PEOPLE & PLACES



TO INTRODUCE THE FLAMES initiative, the banner group of Haney Church, Maple Ridge, B.C., presented a Fan the FLAMES banner. The banner will be on display for the next seven years, and each year's theme emphasis will be added to the banner beginning in June 1999. The members of the banner group are (L to R): Dorothy Newman, Flora Thain, Margaret Peck, Mary Bradley, Betty Fleming and Dot Jackson.



THE CONGREGATION OF Westwood Church, Winnipeg, welcomed back former member Chris Vais for a special presentation on Sleeping Children Around the World. Fifty-four bedrolls were presented for children in India. Westwood has also begun the tradition of honouring each baby born into the congregation with the donation of a bedroll in his or her name. Donna Mawson and Phyllis Bell point to a display for the project.



DOROTHY AND FRANK TOWNSEND made a bonnie couple at the 1st Robbie Burns Supper held at Knox Church, St. Catharines, Ont.

DEBORAH DOLBEAR is the third woman from the congregation of Appin Church, Appin, Ont., to become an ordained minister. She follows in the footsteps of Rev. Shirley Jeffrey (who, in 1968, became the first woman ordained by The Presbyterian Church in Canada) and Rev. Jane Johnson, ordained in 1981. Pictured with her is

Rev. John Bannerman, moderator of the Presbytery of London.



THE CHURCH SCHOOL CHILDREN of Knox Church, Victoria, created a garden with some of the paper flowers made for the 124th General Assembly by children across the country. The flowers were brought back to Victoria from the Assembly in Windsor, Ont., by commissioner Ivan Cronsberry and his wife, Laura. The Knox children also sent friendship notes to the children who made the flowers. Some of the "gardeners" were (L to R): Sarah Goulet (teacher-in-training), Hannah, Sophie and Jarrod Bothwell-Benoit, and Maureen Bothwell (teacher).

Please note: Photos submitted for People & Places must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope if they are to be returned. Also, please try to ensure all pictures are clear and do not include a multitude of people. Colour or black-and-white photos are acceptable, but negatives and slides cannot be used. Thank you.

PEOPLE & PLACES

THE WOMEN OF St. Andrew's Church, Pickering Village, Ajax, Ont., relax following their successful 11th Annual Valentine Tea. ▶



▼ CUTTING A CAKE celebrating the 130th anniversary of Gale Church, Elmira, Ont., are: Mary Haight (left), clerk of session; Rev. Alan McPherson, guest speaker; Rev. Linda Bell, minister.



THE WILLIAMS LAKE, B.C., House Church held a weekend retreat as part of an *Alpha* course. In the back (L to R) are: Vivien Lawrence, Stuart Crowhurst, John Foster, Erno Krajczar and Lucy Stewart. In the front are: ▼ Brian Lawrence, Craig Lawrence, Rev. John Wyminga, Shannon Bell-Wyminga, Mary Krajczar and Malcolm Stewart.



◀ IN RESPONSE TO "Something Extra," the congregation of Athelstan Church, Athelstan, Que., collected loonies and twonies for a year. A total of \$832 was raised for children in Malawi who have lost their parents to AIDS. Clerk of session Donald Grant is shown emptying the coins onto a tray held by Patricia Westover (left) and Janet Grant, while three children look on.

"THE CHAMPIONS FOR JESUS," otherwise known as the primary class of St. Andrew's Church, Aurora, Ont., put on a special Palm Sunday presentation under the direction of teacher Helgard Vander Veen. ▶



PEOPLE & PLACES

THE WMS OF Fraser Church, Tottenham, Ont., presented Victoria Eldridge with a preaching gown. She is pictured with (L to R): Irene Abbott, Alison Eldridge, Laurainne Cenerini and Rhoda Montgomery.



MEMBERS OF Knox Church, Kincardine, Ont., braved a snowstorm to be present for the dedication of a banner. The banner is being hung outside during 1999 to encourage the community to join Knox in the celebration of its 150th anniversary.



WHILE DOING DEPUTATION WORK in Western Canada, Rev. Stewart Gillan (centre) was reunited with two members of the 1975 Presbyterian Youth Evangelism Team "Emmaus Road" — Janie Goodwin of Delta, B.C., and Rev. Doug Goodwin of Vanderhoof, B.C.



CHURCH SCHOOL TEACHERS Helen Robson (second from left) and Leila Lloyd, who also served as superintendent, were presented with gifts on their retirement after 30 years of teaching at St. John's Church, Bradford, Ont. Making the presentations were Laura Jones and Andrew Fulford.

BEFORE HIS DEATH, Rev. John McBride asked his wife, Mae, to see that his preaching gowns were presented to Jim Redpath when he became ordained. On February 28, Mae McBride and their daughter, Heather Martin, were on hand at Knox Church, Fingal, Ont., for that presentation, joined by Jim's wife, Shirley (left), and Rev. Terry Ingram, minister of Oakridge Church, London, Ont., where the Redpaths were members prior to Jim's ordination. The Redpaths had been members at St. Andrew's Church, Brampton, Ont., when John McBride was the minister, and it was John who officiated at their wedding.



PEOPLE & PLACES

THE 78TH FRASER HIGHLANDERS recently inducted Rev. Scott Emery, minister of St. Andrew's Church, Quebec City, as an assistant chaplain. This year marks the 240th anniversary of St. Andrew's Church, whose first minister was chaplain of the regiment during the Battle of the Plains of Abraham. With Scott (second from right) are (L to R): Capt. B. H. Greenaway, captain of the Honourable Guard; Rev. James Cooper, regimental chaplain; Maj. S. K. Anderson, officer commanding, York Garrison; and Capt. Wm. Murray, adjutant.



THE CONGREGATION OF Knox Church, Agincourt, Ont., recently donated \$7,000 to refurbish rooms at Fernie House. The donation came from money raised during the congregation's 150th anniversary last year. Rev. Paul Cornish of Fernie House looks on while Katherine McGreechan and Paul Barrett of Knox, Dr. Townsend of Fernie House, and Barbara Swankie of Knox hold the cheque.



THE JUNIOR CHOIR OF Knox Church, Oshawa, Ont., under the direction of Erwin Stroobach, enjoyed a day off from school to sing at the March 3 service at Knox College, Toronto.



A NEW ACCESSIBILITY RAMP was officially opened and dedicated at Knox Church, Mitchell, Ont. Clarke Moses, a longtime member who recently marked 40 years as an elder, cuts the ribbon, flanked by Bruce McDougall (left), building committee chair, and Rev. Peter Bush.



PROFESSOR WILL OXTOBY (religious studies, University of Toronto) displays a copy of the "Proclamation of Martial Law in Jerusalem" by General Allenby, December 1917, presented to him by Rosedale Church, Toronto. Professor Oxtoby presented a series of 10 lectures at Rosedale on "Christians and the World Religions." Shown with him is Rev. Stanley Walters.

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REVIEWS

**About Myself: Portrait of Andrew
Who Has Autism** by Lucie Milne with
the Bloomfield Family (Guelph
Services for the Autistic, Root Plaza
Postal Outlet, PO Box 23016, Guelph,
Ont. N1H 8H9, 1998, \$25). Reviewed
by Jo Ann and Stephen Sutherland.

Andrew Bloomfield, 30, is an active man. He has friends, a job and several interests. What makes him and his family special is that Andrew has autism. *About Myself* is about the challenges Andrew faced. At 54 pages, this book is a brief glimpse into what growing up with autism is like for the individual and for the family. Author Lucie Milne is a retired minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Despite what the title may imply, *About Myself* is not an autobiography or even Andrew's biography; it is an account of his entire immediate family. True autobiographies by autistic individuals exist, but this book is unique in showing the individual as an integral part of a family. Detailing what it means to be an individual with autism in Canada helps make this book both relevant and unique.

Most of the detail in the book concerns the struggle of the parents to find resources and information. Thirty years ago, there were limited resources available to parents who were told their child had autism. Since 1968, when Andrew was born, there has been a fundamental change in the way society views disabled people. The only available help for Andrew at age five was a residential program in Toronto; he saw his family only on weekends. His parents advocated having a special autism class in place for when he started at a local school in Guelph, Ontario, at age seven. In the mid-1990s, the emphasis shifts away

from reliance on "outside" help to family-based initiatives.

It is gratifying to see Andrew as a young man, having emerged from the silence of his disability (before Facilitated Communication, his ability to communicate was limited). His personality and individuality come out. And his own description of his experiences appears in the book. It relates his various interests, jobs and learning to live in the community.

The church needs to understand the struggles of people like Andrew and his family. The family's efforts to join local churches were thwarted by people's perceptions of Andrew and his autistic behaviour. As Andrew's mother, Elizabeth, states: "If we had already been part of a congregation before Andrew's birth, it might have been different. But we came to Guelph complete with family and autism."

All proceeds from the sale of the book go to Guelph Services for the Autistic.

Jo Ann and Stephen Sutherland are proud parents of two boys, five and seven, the younger diagnosed with autism. They are members of First Church in Winnipeg.

Who Killed Canadian History?

by J. L. Granatstein (Harper Collins, 1998, \$22). Reviewed by James W. May and Jane E. May.

The most shocking thing about Granatstein's *Who Killed Canadian History?* is that it is not an exaggeration. In his direct and incisive book, Granatstein offers ample evidence of a nation-wide ignorance of Canadian history on the part of youth in our education systems. Unfortunately, the worst scenario is not merely an inadequate knowledge of Canadian history but a distorted knowledge of that history. Ministries of education across

the country have encouraged a topical, not a chronological, teaching of history that has been filtered through a regional approach and contemporary ideas of political correctness.

How has this sorry situation come about? Granatstein points out that misguided educational policies (remember the *Hall-Dennis Report*? I wish more people remembered the reply, James Daly's *Education or Molasses*) in the hands of timid and partisan provincial politicians have led to this widespread disaster. He examines exactly what history is taught province by province. In more than one province, it is possible to go through the system without taking any Canadian history. Textbook writers, anxious to reflect provincial policies, have also short-changed Canadian history in order to be accepted on provincial curriculums. The universities fare no better. Granatstein claims university history departments have occupied themselves with internecine warfare, or fragmented and distorted Canadian history even further, by writing unreadable books about trivial incidents from the point of view of special interest groups. He shows courage in an interesting chapter that tackles well-intentioned but misguided multiculturalism as an official policy in the classroom.

Don't for a moment think all this is unimportant. People who have undergone this inadequate presentation of Canadian history in the classroom are now teachers, politicians, film directors (remember *The Valour and the Horror*?), journalists and public administrators. They are making decisions that will affect the future with only a piecemeal understanding of the past, frequently driven by a wish to make history fit some contemporary issue. This is a highly dangerous situation where factual truth and cultural literacy are casualties. Are we the only nation in the world not to realize the importance of teaching our citizenry the nation's history?

Fortunately, Granatstein offers some specific solutions. He wants Ottawa to be a key player in the restoration of academic standards in history. Whether

Ottawa will take up the challenge, perhaps stepping on provincial toes, remains to be seen. But Granatstein has taken the first step in getting Ottawa to act by writing a well-documented, scholarly, yet wholly readable book. It deserves everyone's attention.

James W. May, head of history at West Elgin Secondary School, and Jane E. May, an English teacher at Glencoe District High School, are members of Appin Church, Appin, Ont.

The Kids Campfire Book by Jane Drake and Ann Love, illustrated by Heather Collins, songs by Matthew Dewar (Kids Can Press, 1996, \$14.95).
Reviewed by Dorothy Henderson

The Kids Campfire Book is a solid choice for church libraries, day camps, resident summer camps and families who camp together. The book features nature games, campfire songs and games, outdoor skills, ghost stories, campfire cooking and stargazing. There are instructions for building a homemade smudge pot to deter the 7,000 kinds of blackflies in North America, recipes for making three different kinds of fire-starters, directives for howling so wolves will answer, creepy goosebumps games such as Murder in the Dark, knee-slapping rain-maker songs, and just-plain-silly campfire activities. The book also contains facts about outdoor mysteries such as, Why does smoke follow you around?

The Kids Campfire Book is an excellent choice for a new camp counsellor needing some basic skills and activities. It also makes a good gift for a child heading to church camp for the first time.

Dorothy Henderson has responsibility for Christian education and ministry with children and youth at national church offices.

Most books reviewed may be purchased through The Book Room, 50 Wynford Dr., North York, Ont. M3C 1J7. Do not send payment with order. An invoice will follow. Please include name and location of congregation. Toll-free order line: 1-800-619-7301, ext. 301, e-mail: bookroom@presbyterian.ca.

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FROM THE MODERATOR

(Continued from page 4)

gations are where the real work of the church takes place. To change the analogy, congregations are on the front-line; presbyteries, synods, General Assembly, national offices and theological colleges are there to provide the behind-the-line support and resources. As we seek to fulfil Christ's mandate in the third millennium — to preach, teach and make disciples — our congregations must be believing, mission-minded, Christ-centred, praying communities reaching out with the good news of the gospel to those who know it not. Our church structures must assist them to do so.

FLAMES and Celebrate!

At the "Heads of Churches" meeting in February (the term grates on Presbyterian ears because we believe Jesus Christ is the only Head of the Church), I reported what was happening in our denomination. I was able to generate their interest when I spoke of the FLAMES initiative, the celebration of the 125th anniversary of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and our involvement in the call to Jubilee.

Both FLAMES, with its focus on mission beginning this June, and *Celebrate!*, with its emphasis on finding, funding and carrying out a project in the immediate community in celebration of our 125th anniversary, are excellent programs. But, as with any program, it is the delivery at the local level that is all-important. It is my fervent hope every congregation and every member will participate with enthusiasm.

As we celebrate the 2,000th anniversary of Christ's birth and the 125th anniversary of our national church, and enter the third millennium, we should do so with joyful thanksgiving to God for preserving our church. God has great things in store for those who love him. With repentance for our failures and the plea for forgiveness, let us resolve to "Turn to God and Rejoice in Hope."

Yet, we must always remember the church lives not by programs but by the Word of God. In the past, Presbyterians have been distinguished by an emphasis on the preaching and teaching of God's Word. I hope we will continue to be so

known. "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the preaching of Christ." How much preaching in our church is the preaching of Christ? Christ must be at the centre. Every renewal of the church has occurred through the faithful proclamation of God's Word — by a preaching that is biblical, Christ-centred, inspired by the Holy Spirit and that addresses every area of life, personal and social.

The Office of Moderator

Presbyterians hold the office of Moderator in high regard. Moderators of General Assembly are, thus, in a favourable position not only to represent the church but to speak to it. I hope they will be enabled to do so by a realistic travel budget and other levels of support to make the Moderator more accessible to congregations and presbyteries.

We have rightly curbed the power of Moderators by having a one-year term. Have we taken equal care to curb the power of clerks who have no limited term? Moderators of Assembly usually gain valuable insights during their moderatorial year of travel. How can our national church make effective use of these insights?

Finally, I am exceedingly grateful for the rare privilege of being elected Moderator of the 124th General Assembly. I thank John Congram and Margaret Miller of the *Record* for the opportunity to communicate with the church through this column. I am also grateful to Rev. Stanley Walters, convener, Terrie-Lee Hamilton, secretary, and the other members of the Committee to Advise and to Stephen Kendall, principal clerk, and Barbara McLean, deputy clerk, and so many others for their help and support. Above all, I thank my wife, Lois, and my family for their support, as well as all who have kept me in their prayers.

To the Moderator-Elect, Rev. Art Van Seters, and his wife, Rowena, I extend my congratulations. May God bless them richly and may their moderatorial year be a blessing to our church.

Bice Klempa

DEATHS

COCHRANE, REV. DR. CHARLES CLARKE, quietly, at the Seven Oaks Home for the Aged in Toronto, March 9, 1999, at the age of 88. Charles was predeceased by his wife, Isobel, and is survived by sons Donald, William and Douglas; grandchildren, Diana, Jenna, Donna, Cara, David, Eric and Toland; and great-grandchild, Jessica.

Charles was a Presbyterian minister at Georgetown, Ontario; Melville Church, Westmount, Quebec (for 28 years); and at the tri-congregations in East Toronto before retiring to Waterloo, Ontario. As part of his ministry, he served on the Senate of The Presbyterian College, taught religious education in Westmount high schools, was chair of the North American area of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, was moderator of the Presbytery of Montreal and of the Synod of Quebec and Eastern Ontario. A tremendous aspect of Charlie Cochrane's life was his love of scholarship and his loving care of the disenfranchised and poor.

A memorial service was held at Waterloo North Presbyterian Church, Waterloo, March 15.

ISAAC, REV. DR. WILLIAM JESSIMAN OGSTON, son of the late Rev. James A. Isaac and Barbara M. (Jessiman) Isaac, died in Truro, Nova Scotia, on January 5, 1999. Born in England in 1921, he moved with his family to Scotland shortly after his birth. The family immigrated to Canada in 1927.

He studied at the University of Western Ontario and at The Presbyterian College, Montreal, graduating from the latter in 1950. He was ordained on May 26, 1950, in Embro, Ontario, in the church where his father was the minister. He was the minister of the Tatamagouche pastoral charge in Nova Scotia, Maisonneuve Church in Montreal, and Gloucester Church in the Presbytery of Ottawa before being appointed as a chaplain in the Royal Canadian Army Chaplain Corps in July 1960. He served at Gagetown, New Brunswick; Germany; Calgary, Alberta; Cyprus; Penfold, Alberta; and at Borden, Ontario. In 1976, he was appointed as the superintendent of missions for the Synod of the Atlantic Provinces.

The Presbyterian College, Montreal, conferred on him the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity in May 1985. In the same year, he was elected moderator of the Synod of the Atlantic Provinces. He was an

active participant on many of the boards and committees of the church, including the Board of Home Missions, the board of The Presbyterian College, Montreal, and, for many years, on the board of the Coverdale Foundation. He served for three years as the clerk of the Synod of Alberta.

During his tenure as superintendent of missions and in his retirement, he was a loyal supporter of the Atlantic Mission Society. He was appointed as the chaplain to Branch 26 of the Royal Canadian Legion in Truro, Nova Scotia, in 1996, and served in that capacity until his death.

He married Carol A. McKean of Montreal in 1958. He is survived by his wife; their daughter, Catherine, and her husband, Stephen Jamieson; two grandchildren, David and Meghan; and a sister, Jeanne Tester.

A service of celebration was held within St. James' Presbyterian Church, Truro, Nova Scotia, on January 9, 1999, with Rev. G. Clair MacLeod and Rev. Dr. J. Kenneth MacLeod officiating.

MURRAY, REV. JOHN MCINNES, 93, died April 8, 1999, in Burlington, Ontario. Born in England, and educated in Birmingham and Knox College, he served as a missionary under the Salvation Army and the Church of Scotland in the Bhil field, India. In Canada, he held pastorates in Caledon East and Milton. He is survived by his wife, Jessie, and daughter, Heather. A service was held in Aldershot Presbyterian Church.

ARMIT, JAMES, member of session, Sunday school superintendent, representative elder, Renfrew Presbyterian Church, Renfrew, Ont., died Feb. 16, 1999.

BELLAMY, RICHARD J., 80, passed away April 15, 1999. A devout Christian, Dick served his church in several capacities: as a Sunday school teacher, church treasurer, in the choir, on the board of managers and as a respected elder of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Lakefield, Ont. Dick's dedication, wisdom and faithful commitment will be remembered by all those whose lives he touched.

BLACK, FLORA, 85, longtime member, Knox Church, Milton, Ont. Faithful servant of the Lord and devoted wife of the late Rev. Wm. Black (Cranbrook, Aldershot, Dresden, Port Perry/Ashburn). Peacefully on March 30, 1999, surrounded by her loving family. Interment in Ashburn cemetery.

CHAPLIN, GLADYS, 97 years, peacefully on

Jan. 28, 1999, a longtime faithful member of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Lakefield, Ont. Dedicated to the work of the church, Gladys was a former organist, choir director, Sunday school teacher, and a worker in the Presbyterian Women's Group. As an avid gardener, Gladys's flowers often enhanced the sanctuary during worship. As a great animal enthusiast, Gladys provided a good home for many stray cats (and abandoned skunks). A beloved friend to everyone, Gladys will be remembered for her wonderful sense of humour and her dynamic witness to the presence of God in all aspects of her life.

CLARK, JANE "JEAN," age 99, faithful member of Knox, Windsor, Ont., since Dec. 1, 1929, died March 19, 1999.

GRAHAM, MARY "MAY," age 98, faithful member of Knox, Windsor, Ont., since Dec. 11, 1927, died Feb. 20, 1999.

HENRY, BARBARA MARY (née BEAL), born 1907, Toronto; died Unionville, Ont., Feb. 21, 1999.

Graduating Toronto Bible College 1931, married Morgan Henry 1938, the mother of four. Throughout her life, Barbara opened her home to lonely servicemen, needy teens, neighbours and friends, providing a warm bed, good meal and words of encouragement. Instrumental in starting Agincourt Home and School, became president, taught teen and adult Bible classes. Moved to Unionville in 1990, was active on residents council. In 1995, her 88th year, received her Bachelor of Religious Education. Longtime member, Guildwood Church, and, later, Unionville Church.

The memorial service at Unionville Church celebrated Barbara's life and abiding faith. Barbara will be remembered for her inspirational Christian spirit, readiness to listen and help, and her simple goodness.

HOOEY, ELSIE MAY, 96, longtime member, elder and church school teacher of Nestleton-Cadmus Presbyterian Church, Ont., Jan. 2.

McCONNELL, ELIZABETH W., 84, longtime member and faithful supporter of the Erskine Missionary Fellowship, Erskine, Ottawa, Aug. 26, 1998.

MURPHY, CHRISTINA, 84, faithful member of Memorial Presbyterian Church, Sylvan Lake, Alta. April 15.

MURRAY, ELIZABETH "BETTY," former secretary, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Scarborough, Ont., and East

The Transitions column welcomes announcements of special events such as births, marriages, anniversaries, baptisms and the reception of new members, as well as death notices. The rate is 90 cents per word or \$43 per column inch (the lower amount) plus GST.

All notices of pulpits vacancies, recognitions, ordinations and inductions will be charged to presbyteries: \$10 for the basic notice and 90 cents per word for additional information. (There will be no charge to congregations on the Every Home or Club 50 plans.)

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For more information, contact:
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Warren Hughes (416) 221-7906.

Leave name and phone number.
If your interests are inclined to set construction, production and backstage activity, give us a call, also.

TRANSITIONS

Toronto Presbytery, strong supporter of all aspects of the church, passed away March 14, 1999; will be sadly missed.

ROBERTSON, CHARLES ALEXANDER, 81, a longtime faithful member and elder emeritus, Barney's River Presbyterian Church, Kenzieville, N.S., Dec. 24.

INDUCTIONS and RECOGNITIONS

Spencer, Rev. Robert C., director, LAOS Ministries, St. Andrew's Hespeler, Cambridge, Ont., April 13.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES and INTERIM MODERATORS

Synod of the Atlantic Provinces

Halifax, Church of St. David. Rev. P.A. McDonald, 4 Pinehill Rd., Dartmouth, N.S. B3A 2E6.

Harvey Station, N.B., Knox and Acton. Rev. Philip Lee, 311 Bay Crescent Dr., Saint John, N.B. E2M 6M1.

Miramichi, N.B., St. James. Rev. Mel Fawcett, 395 Murray Ave., Bathurst, N.B. E2A 1T4.

Moncton, N.B., St. Andrew's. Rev. Andrew Hutchinson, 600 Coverdale Rd., Riverview, N.B. E1B 3K6.

New Glasgow, N.S., Westminster. Rev. Glenn Cooper, Box 1078, Westville, N.S. B0K 2A0.

River John, N.S., St. George's; Toney River, St. David's. Rev. Kenneth MacLeod, Box 185, New Glasgow, N.S. B2H 5E2.

St. John's, Nfld., St. Andrew's. Rev. John C. Duff, PO Box 6206, Stn. C, St. John's, Nfld. A1C 6J9.

St. John's, Nfld., St. David's (effective June 30). Rev. Ian S. Wishart, 5 Chestnut Place, St. John's, Nfld. A1B 2T1.

Springhill, N.S., St. David's; Oxford, St. James; Riverview, St. Andrew's. Rev. Mark McLennan, RR 2, Scotsburn, N.S. B0K 1R0. Summerside, P.E.I., Summerside Church. Rev. Christine Schulze, Box 32, Tyne Valley, P.E.I. C0B 2C0.

Synod of Quebec and Eastern Ontario

Avonmore, Ont., St. Andrew's; Finch, St. Luke's-Knox; Gravel Hill, St. James-St. Andrew's. Rev. Fred Rennie, 28 Second St. E, Cornwall, Ont. K6H 1Y3.

Beaconsfield, Que., Briarwood. Rev. Glynis Williams, Action Réfugiés Montreal, 1410 Guy, Montreal, Que. H3H 2L7.

Beauharnois, Que., St. Edward's; Valleyfield, Valleyfield Church (part-time). Rev. Kate Jordan, 50 Prince, Huntingdon, Que. J0S 1H0.

Dunvegan, Ont., Kenyon; Kirk Hill, St. Columba. Rev. Edward O'Neill, Box 7, Maxville, Ont. K0C 1T0.

Fort-Coulange, Que., St. Andrew's; Bristol, Bristol Memorial. Rev. Ruth Syme, Box 1983, Deep River, Ont. K0J 1P0.

Ingleside, Ont., St. Matthew's (part-time). Rev. Ian MacMillan, 18220 S. Branch Rd., Cornwall, Ont. K6H 5R6.

Montreal, Chambit Church. Rev. Barry Mack, 496 Birch Ave., St. Lambert, Que. J4P 2M8.

Montreal, Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul. Rev. J.C. McLelland, 121 Alston Rd., Pointe-Claire, Que. H9R 3E2.

Montreal, Knox Crescent Kensington and First. Rev. Richard Topping, 3415 Redpath St., Montreal, Que. H3G 2G2.

Montreal, Korean. Rev. John Kim, 298 Rudar Rd., Mississauga, Ont. L5A 1S3.

Montreal, Maisonneuve-St. Cuthbert's. Rev. Coralie Jackson-Bissonnette, 5545 Snowdon Ave., Montreal, Que. H3X 1Y8.

Pierrefonds, Que., Westminster. Rev. James Douglas, 1345 Lapointe, St. Laurent, Que. H4L 1K5.

Synod of Toronto and Kingston

Ashburn, Burns. Rev. Andrew Allison, Box 138, Leaskdale, Ont. L0C 1C0; (905) 852-1171; e-mail: leaskdalepres@interhop.net.

Bolton, Caven. Rev. Issa A. Saliba, 9846 Keele St., Box 5097, Maple, Ont. L6A 1R6.

Bowmanville, St. Andrew's. Rev. David McBride, PO Box 311, Port Hope, Ont. L1A 3W4.

Brampton, St. Andrew's. Rev. Peter Barrow, 38 Edith St., Georgetown, Ont. L7G 3B1.

Burk's Falls, St. Andrew's; Magnetawan, Knox; Sundridge, Knox (1.5 ministers). Rev. Job van Hartingsveldt, Box 650, Burk's Falls, Ont. P0A 1C0.

Cambridge, Knox's Galt. Rev. Kevin Livingston, St. Andrew's Hespeler Church, 73 Queen St. E, Cambridge, Ont. N3C 2A9.

Claude, Claude Church. Rev. Gerald Rennie, 67 Churchill Rd. N, Acton, Ont. L7J 2H9.

Collingwood, First (two ministers). Rev. James Kitson, 539 Hugel Ave., Midland, Ont. L4R 1W1.

Guelph, Knox (June 30). Rev. Linda Bell, 2 Cross St., Elmira, Ont. N3B 2S5.

Hastings, St. Andrew's; Warkworth, St. Andrew's. Rev. Roger Millar, Box 327, Norwood, Ont. K0L 2V0.

Hillsdale, St. Andrew's; Craighurst, Knox (half-time). Rev. Tim Purvis, Box 26, Stayner, Ont. L0M 1S0.

King City, St. Andrew's. Rev. Daniel D. Scott, 107 Compton Cres., Bradford, Ont. L3Z 2X7.

Kitchener, Calvin. Rev. Angus Sutherland, Central Presbyterian Church, Queen's Square, Cambridge, Ont. N1S 1H4.

Kitchener, St. Andrew's (effective July 31). Rev. Murray Laurenson, 360 Tower St. N, Fergus, Ont. N1M 2N7.

Mount Forest, St. Andrew's; Conn, Knox. Rev. Hans W. Zegerius, 125 Mountford Dr., Guelph, Ont. N1E 4G2.

North Bay, Calvin. Rev. Freda & Rev. Graham MacDonald, Box 650, Burk's Falls, Ont. P0A 1C0.

Oakville, Knox Sixteen. Rev. E.R. Fenton, 375 Christina Dr., Oakville, Ont. L6K 1H5.

Parry Sound, St. Andrew's. Rev. Raye Brown, 1 High St., Huntsville, Ont. P1H 1P2.

Scarborough, Fallingbrook. Rev. Glen & Rev. Joyce Davis, 4156 Sheppard Ave. E, Agincourt, Ont. M1S 1T4.

TRANSITIONS

Scarborough, St. John's, Milliken. Rev. Duncan Jeffrey, 60 Overlord Cres., Scarborough, Ont. M1B 4P3.

South Monaghan, Centreville (renewable term, presbytery appointment). Rev. Ken MacRae, 785 Park St. S, Peterborough, Ont. K9J 3T6.

Toronto, All People (Mahn-Min). Rev. In Kee Kim, 3625 Haven Glenn, Mississauga, Ont. L4X 1X7.

Toronto, Gateway Community. Rev. Robert Syme, 19 Queensbury Ave., Toronto, Ont. M1N 2X8.

Toronto, Leaside. Rev. Art Van Seters, 59 St. George St., Toronto, Ont. M5S 2E6.

Toronto, Victoria-Royce. Rev. Jim Cuthbertson, 250 Dunn Ave., Toronto, Ont. M6K 2R9.

Tweed, St. Andrew's. Rev. Chen-Chen Abbott, Box 118, Stirling, Ont. K0K 3E0.

Whitby, St. Andrew's. Rev. Douglas Rollwage, 140 Guildwood Pkwy., Toronto, Ont. M1E 1P4.

Synod of Southwestern Ontario

Ailsa Craig, Ailsa Craig Church. Rev. John Bannerman, 342 Pond Mills Rd., London, Ont. N5Z 3X5; (519) 681-7242.

Blenheim, Blenheim Church (half-time). Rev. Evelyn Carpenter, 60 Fifth St., Chatham, Ont. N7M 4V7.

Burlington, Knox. Rev. David McInnis, 179 Cornwallis Rd., Ancaster, Ont. L9G 4H2.

Crinan, Argyle; Largie, Duff's. Rev. Jennifer Cameron, RR 2, Glencoe, Ont. N0L 1M0.

Dundalk, Erskine; Swinton Park, St. Andrew's. Rev. Pearl Vasarhelyi, General Delivery, Holstein, Ont. N0G 2A0.

Fingall, Knox; Port Stanley, St. John's. Rev. Gloria Langlois, Box 39, Belmont, Ont. N0L 1B0.

Forest, St. James. Rev. Joop Eenkhoorn, 311 Michigan Ave., Point Edward, Ont. N7V 1G1.

Fort Erie, St. Andrew's-Knox. Rev. Donna J. Riseborough, 176 Elm St., Port Colborne, Ont. L3K 4N6.

Glencoe, Glencoe Church; Wardsville, St. John's. Rev. Kathryn Strachan, PO Box 72, Appin, Ont. N0L 1A0.

Hagersville, St. Andrew's; Port Dover, Knox. Rev. Thomas G. Vais, 117 Argyle St. N, Caledonia, Ont. N3W 1B8.

Jarvis, Knox; Walpole, Chalmers. Rev. Jeffrey Chalmers, 44 Linnigton Trail, Dundas, Ont. L9H 7A3.

Komoka; North Caradoc; Mount Brydges, St. Andrew's. Rev. Dennis Carrothers, 901-700 Wonderland Rd. N, London, Ont. N6H 4V3.

Markdale, Cooke's; Feversham, Burn's. Mr. Rick Eidenmueller, RR 6, Markdale, Ont. N0C 1H0.

Niagara Falls, Stamford. Rev. Martin Wehrmann, c/o 515 Scott St., St. Catharines, Ont. L2M 3X3; <http://mainframe.shyft.com/stamfordpresbyterian/>.

North Pelham, First; Rockway. Rev. Elizabeth S. Kidnew, 30 Brookbank Cres., Fonthill, Ont. L0S 1E0.

Port Elgin, Tolmie Memorial; Burgoyne, Knox. Rev. Ted Green, 865 Second Ave. W, Owen Sound, Ont. N4K 4M6.

St. Thomas, Knox. Rev. Terry Ingram, 862 Freele St., London, Ont. N6H 3P3.

Sarnia, St. Andrew's. Rev. Thomas Rodger, 120 S. Russell St., Sarnia, Ont. N7T 3L1.

Stoney Creek, Heritage Green. Rev. Alan McPherson, 165 Charlton Ave. W, Hamilton, Ont. L8P 2C8.

Teeswater, Knox; Kinlough, Kinlough Church. Rev. Paul Chambers, Box 208, Ripley, Ont. N0G 2R0.

Tiverton, Knox. Rev. Ken Wild, Box 404, Southampton, Ont. N0H 2L0.

Waterdown, Knox. Rev. Bob Dawson, 2138 Brant St., Burlington, Ont. L7P 3W5.

Synod of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario

Flin Flon, St. Andrew's, half-time ordained minister. Rev. Margaret Mullin, 1405 Van Horne Ave., Brandon, Man. R7A 1E4; phone/fax: 204-727-4414; e-mail: mullinm@mb.sympatico.ca.

Full-time regional staff position. Rev. Jean Bryden, Search Committee Convener, 808-9th St. NW, Portage la Prairie, Man. R1N 3L3.

Thunder Bay, Ont., Calvin. Rev. Joanne R. MacOdrum, Box 342, Geraldton, Ont. P0T 1M0.

Winnipeg, St. Andrew's (part-time). Rev. Henry Hildebrandt, Box 447, Kenora, Ont. P9N 3X4.

Synod of Saskatchewan

Biggar, St. Andrew's. Rev. M.E. Marsh, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Box 621, Biggar, Sask. S0K 0M0.

Regina, Norman Kennedy. Rev. John Ferrier, 718 Elm Cres. NE, Weyburn, Sask. S4H 0S7; 306-842-2776.

Synod of Alberta

Lethbridge, St. Andrew's. Rev. Brown Milne, 10 Varmoor Pl. NW, Calgary, Alta. T3A 0A1; e-mail: milnejb@cadvision.com.

Synod of British Columbia

Sooke, Knox. Rev. John F. Allan, 680 Courtney St., Victoria, B.C. V8W 1C1.

Vancouver, Vancouver Korean (bilingual youth minister). Elder S.D. Sohn, 205 West 10th Ave., Vancouver, B.C. V5Y 1R9.

Vancouver, West Point Grey. Rev. Richard Sand, 2733 West 41st Ave., Vancouver, B.C. V6N 3C5.

White Rock, St. John's (full-time assistant minister). Rev. J.W. Mills, 6341 Holly Park Dr., Delta, B.C. V4K 4T2.

LIFE AND MISSION AGENCY Canada Ministries

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A Child's Way

A page to share with the children you love

Written by Karen Timbers,
minister of Elmwood Avenue
Church, London, Ont.

Jesus: From an Infant to an Adult

Scripture Reading: Luke, chapters 1-4

Try using this litany in worship.

Jesus was an infant, a baby so small,
Born in a stable with no money at all.
He slept and he cried for his diapers to be changed.
His Aunt Elizabeth babysat when it was arranged.

A baby, a baby, Jesus was a baby;
A baby, a baby, just like you and me.

He learned to crawl along the floor and then he learned to walk.
He watched his dad hard at work in his carpenter's shop.
He ran outside to play with the children on the street.
And he loved it when his mom baked him a special treat.

A child, a child, Jesus was a child;
A child, a child, just like you and me.

He learned to hammer and to saw and sand different woods,
And to listen to his teachers to learn all he should.
He went to church each Sabbath and worshipped every week.
For the answers to his questions, the truth he did seek.

A teenager, a teenager, Jesus was a teenager;
A teenager, a teenager, just like you and me.

He chose to serve God daily and was baptized by his cousin.
His teaching was so powerful, it caused considerable discussion.
He showed by his example how to share God's love to all —
To heal the sick and those in need is an answer to God's call.

A young adult, a young adult, Jesus was a young adult;
A young adult, a young adult, just like you and me.

He chose twelve people as his disciples to teach them all God's ways;
He knew he would have to leave them, and they would have to stay.
He was willing to die on the cross for us, to demonstrate God's grace;
He gave us the work of God's kingdom — of love and justice and peace.

An adult, an adult, Jesus was an adult, not quite like you and me;
An adult, an adult, feeling human and fully divine.

A note to adults reading this page:

- Children will identify with Jesus when they recognize he experienced a maturation process comparable to their own.
- Try writing stories about challenges Jesus might have experienced while maturing.



Questions to Consider

1. What do you think Jesus was like as a young boy? Explore what Luke, Chapter 2, tells us.
2. Share stories of when you were a baby, a toddler, a young child, etc., and how you have changed.

Make a Growth Chart

1. Mount the necessary number of bristle board sheets on the wall, starting from the floor up to your present height.
2. Mark what size you were on each of your birthdays by putting a picture of yourself at that age at the height you were then.
3. Keep your growth chart on the wall and, on your next birthday, add another picture at your new height.

(Think about Jesus and what he might have been like at your age.)

Prayer

Dear God,
Because Jesus grew up just like me,
I know he understands me.
Thank you, God, for understanding me.
Amen.

Grace Notes From a Homeless Choir

Stevie Cameron

Every once in a while, I experience a grace note in my life — something I have the wisdom to recognize at the time as extraordinary and powerful and full of delight. That's what happened on a cold afternoon in February when I listened to the Chorale de l'Accueil Bonneau from Montreal. Some of you know this is the homeless men's choir from the Bonneau shelter in Old Montreal. And you'll remember the accident in June 1998 when a gas explosion blew up the shelter, killing three people — including a nun — and injuring 17 others. The people of Montreal came together to rebuild the shelter; and, when it opened again last fall, the choir was there to celebrate.

Let me tell you a little about how the choir got started. Pierre Anthian is a young Frenchman, a dental technician by profession but also a conservatory-trained singer, who had volunteered in a shelter in Paris. When he immigrated to Montreal nearly three years ago, he started volunteering at the Accueil Bonneau. Soon afterward, he decided to found a choir. It began with four men; within months there were 18. They'd go from one metro stop to another, putting out a hat to collect spare change from passers-by. Soon they were making a living for themselves. In November 1998, Anthian took the choir to Paris, where homeless *clochards*, sleeping in doorways and in the metro, have been fixtures for generations. Few people pay any attention to them. The French, however, paid attention to this unusual little choir. They fell in love with them.

When I discovered the choir was coming to Toronto to sing a couple of songs in a televised gala for Raising the Roof, a national charity dedicated to finding solutions for Canada's homeless, I invited


**We clapped
and cheered,
and laughed
and wept**

them to put on a concert at my church, St. Andrew's, where we run one of Toronto's Out of the Cold programs. We invited our own homeless guests as well as staff and volunteers from all the city's hostels, shelters and other Out of the Cold programs. We made sure street people throughout the city knew they'd be welcome. We invited the city's francophone community, and they turned up in droves, led by Louis Duclos, director of the Office of Quebec in Toronto. Some generous sponsors came forward to help. VIA Rail paid for return fares to Toronto. The Crowne Plaza Hotel donated rooms ("They treated us like kings," marvelled one of the men, "and all the rooms had 25-inch televisions!"). Lombard Insurance and the *Toronto Star* covered the other expenses.

Still, we were a bit nervous. We'd never done anything like this before at St. Andrew's, a bastion of Scottish tradition. For an hour before their concert, the men paced back and forth in our church hall, humming melodies, rehearsing solos and chatting with our volunteers. We discovered they were as nervous as we were, even more so when they realized there was an audience of 500 wait-

ing for them. But two minutes after they began singing — accompanied by a keyboard player, a drummer, a guitarist and a trombone player — we were hooked.

Three minutes later, they had us dancing in the aisles. Sister Susan Moran, one of the founders of Out of the Cold, was bopping at the front of the church with our own staid Presbyterians. Anthian's gift for comedy, for choreography and for lovingly managing his singers — some of whom are still very fragile — is a marvel to behold. They gave us the music of Edith Piaf and Charles Trenet, they gave us the Mamas and the Papas and the Beach Boys. Their soloists, Alberto and Daniel and Guy and Jean-Louis, disarmed us with their talent and energy. We clapped along and cheered and laughed and, at the end when they sang "Auld Lang Syne," we wept.

If you have the chance to bring this inspiring choir to your community, I urge you to do so. You will never regret it — or forget it. Let us know if you want more information (elmstreet@m-v-p.com) and we'll send it to you. 

This piece first appeared as the "Editor's Letter" in the April 1999 edition of *Elm Street*. Stevie Cameron is an elder at St. Andrew's King Street, Toronto, and a member of the *Presbyterian Record* Committee.



The Chorale de l'Accueil Bonneau at St. Andrew's King Street, Toronto.

¡Gracias!

The response of Canadian Presbyterians in the wake of hurricanes Mitch and George has been overwhelming. Over \$630,000 has been raised to help support rebuilding in Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala and the Dominican Republic.

Presbyterian response to the disaster was immediate. Informed by local partners in the region and International Ministries staff, Presbyterian World Service & Development was able to issue immediate funds to purchase food, shelter and medicine for people affected by the disaster.

Now, as international attention turns to other events, PWS&D partners in the region continue the long process of rebuilding. They are helping people rebuild homes, supplying seeds to farmers for replanting and helping communities dig wells and latrines.

The need is tremendous. Rebuilding will take many years. Please continue to support this important work.

Over \$630,000 raised.

November 2, 1998. Hurricane Mitch swept through Central America, killing at least 9,000 and displacing 3 million. Flooding, mudslides and high winds destroyed homes, schools, hospitals and food crops. There was water everywhere, but none of it was clean enough to drink.

Thank you!

Presbyterian World Service & Development
and
Presbyterians Sharing ...

*Working together to respond
to Hurricane Mitch.*



**Above: Devastation caused by Hurricane Mitch.
Right: Rebuilding begins. PWS&D is helping local
partners provide basic housing to protect people
from the elements.**



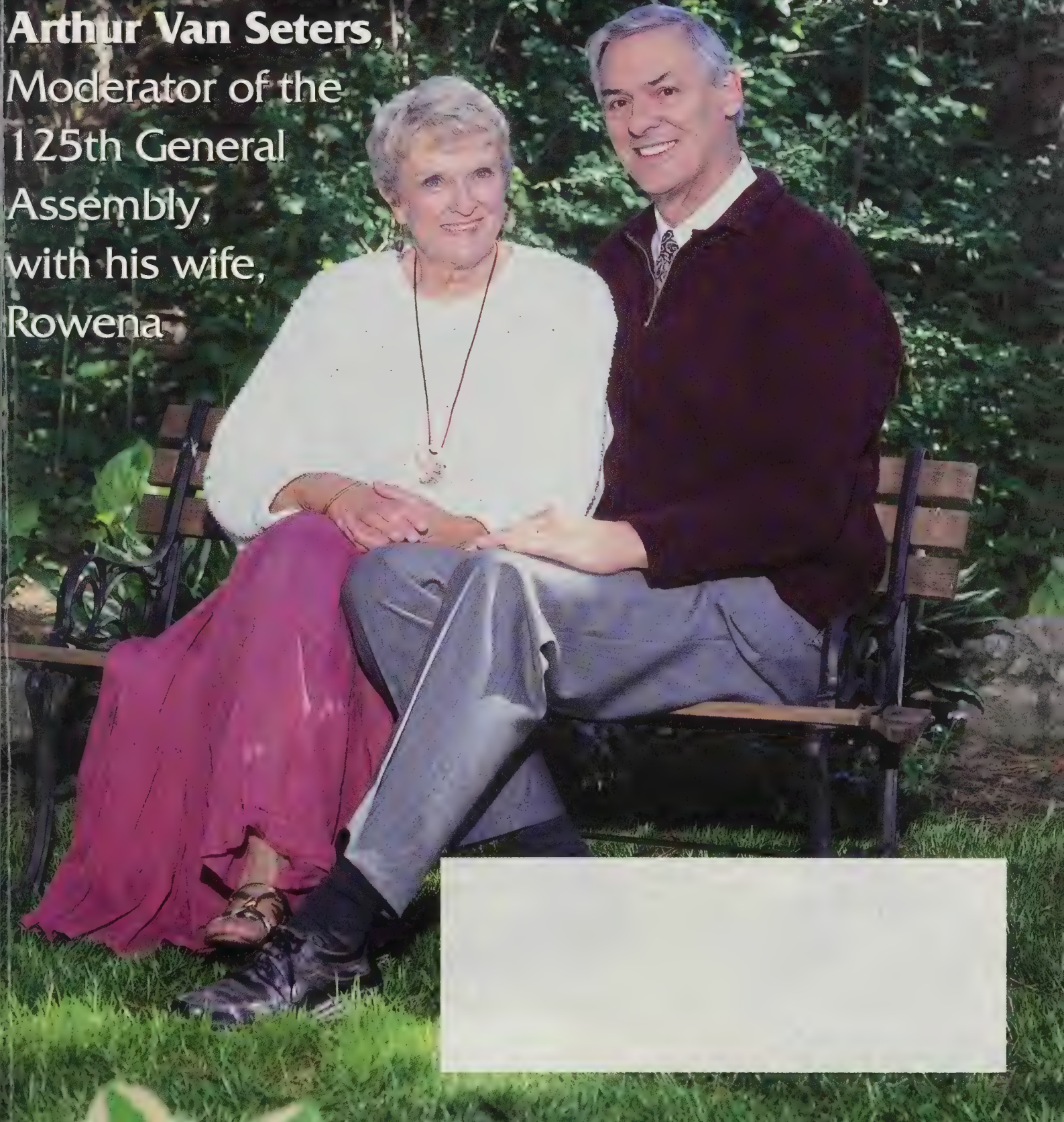
Photo by Jacob Kramer, CRWPC

Photo by Rick Fee, PWS&D

PRESBYTERIAN Record

July/August 1999

Arthur Van Seters,
Moderator of the
125th General
Assembly,
with his wife,
Rowena



Commissioners

Each Assembly has some tedious or abrasive members who try the patience of other members. Others come with a story which they must deliver, even though it is sometimes not very relevant or funny. But on the credit side, these few members make the Assembly appreciate all the more those who have a vital contribution to make, who make it briefly and clearly and then sit down.

— James Simpson

Blessed Are the Merciful

Those who live by mercy will always be disposed to practise mercy, especially to a human being which is so dependent on the mercy of others as the unborn child.

— Karth Barth in *Church Dogmatics: The Doctrine of Creation (III:4)*

Yehudi Menuhin

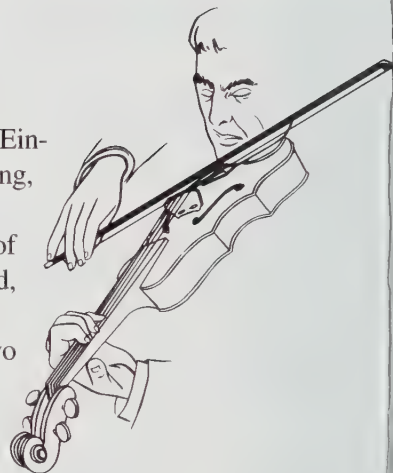
(deceased March 12, 1999)

When the violin prodigy first played in Berlin, Albert Einstein went up to him afterwards and hugged him, saying, "Now I know there is a God in heaven!"

When Menuhin played in Berlin in 1947, victims of Nazism cried out: "Why do you do this?" He replied, "Because it is a crumbling city, and they need music!"

The Jewish terrorist group Irgun (which included two later Israeli prime ministers in its ranks) said, "If you come to Jerusalem, you will die!" He went, and he went, and he went.

— from PBS radio, March 13, 1999



Prayer is Good Medicine, Doctors Say

- A study funded by the U.S. National Institutes of Health showed heart surgery patients assigned chaplains averaged two fewer days in the hospital.
- Yale researchers found older adults who frequently attended religious services in 1982 were less physically disabled 12 years later than infrequent attendees, even after adjusting for health and socio-economic factors.
- Columbia University researchers discovered daughters of religiously committed mothers were 60 per cent less likely to suffer from depression.

— *The Toronto Star*, May 1, 1999



Mission

We often reflect on the meaning of Mission as we approach the millennium. In many ways, Malawi is a more Christianized nation than Canada. All churches continue to grow and there are few Malawians who would say they have no compelling faith to guide their lives. Indeed, the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian in its five synods is now more than 100 years old and is truly an indigenous church.

— Glenn Inglis

Christian Faith and Canadian Unity

Our horizons are narrowed by the fact that our church has drawn its membership largely from a population that stems from the British Isles and few of us have the slightest inkling of what it has been like during the past 200 years to be citizens of a French Canadian Canada. My own experience may have been typical of many Presbyterians. As I was growing up, neither in church nor in school, nor from my contemporaries did I learn anything that would make me respect French Canadians or sympathize with their problems. I shared the prejudices of my community. French Canadians were all of them Roman Catholics and with their high birth rate a threat to the future of Protestantism in Canada! Most of them were poorly educated habitants, kept in ignorance by their priests! I was in my 30s before I met my first French Canadian, a young man of such culture and intellectual quality that he instantly created respect for that Canada, hidden from us, from which he came. Then came contacts with French Canadian Catholic churchmen and all my false images were completely shattered. From them I learned what Anglo-Canadian dominance both in Canada as a whole and also in Quebec has meant for our French-speaking neighbours.

— James D. Smart in the November 1977 *Record*



We Shall Overcome

The 125th General Assembly, unlike the first one, will not be remembered for great theological debate or the resolution of enormous issues. The main topic of debate was money — not in the grand sense of stewardship or what we do with our lives, but money as in “filthy lucre” and where we will spend or not spend a few dollars. Like no other issues, money and sex seem to excite commissioners at a General Assembly. This year, it was money’s turn.

But that is not to say there were not many high and dramatic moments, many outside of the regular business.

Stewart Gillan, a few days after burying his younger brother, standing before the commissioners to receive thanks for his many years of service in South Africa.

Members of the Kitchener-Waterloo Korean Choir joining hands and voices with the Presbyterian African Heritage Gospel Choir to provide a magical celebrative moment as commissioners followed their lead in song and dance.

For me, however, and I suspect for many commissioners, the highest point on the mountain came with the appearance of Bishop Gordon Beardy, the first aboriginal Anglican diocesan bishop in Canada. (The *Record* will include the complete text of his speech in a future issue.) Bishop Beardy spent one year at our Cecilia Jeffrey Indian Residential School near Kenora, Ontario, when he was between 10 and 11. That would be his last year of formal education until he studied theology.

He spoke of the nights at Cecilia Jeffrey spent in his bed crying and alone. His parents and friends were far away at Bearskin Lake, an Ojibwe community 385 kilometres north of Sioux Lookout. His native tongue, the only language he had ever spoken, was forbidden here. He felt confused. “It seemed being an Indian was not important.” He became angry. He vowed every white person would some day pay a price. At 11, vengeance overwhelmed him.

After a few months, he had to escape. By night, he walked; by day, he hid. After two days without food, he fell asleep in the railway station in Redditt. He did not care whether he lived or died.

A white woman asking if she could help and a small dog barking wakened him. A few hours later, he reluctantly accepted her invitation to come to her house. After two days, he asked why she had not called the cops. She told him she knew he had run away but wondered why. That another person, a white person at that, cared enough to ask “Why?” gave him hope.

Eventually, she accompanied him back to school and interceded with the principal so he was not punished. The next summer, he pleaded with his father not to send him back. He returned to the land and traditional ways.

At 36, under his mother’s urging because of her dream, he entered the Anglican priesthood. After ordination, he determined to serve only his own people. When his bishop request-

ed he speak to some white people, he felt like “a modern-day Jonah.” That night, he had a dream in which he heard, “God loves your people and he loves others just as much.”

Bishop Beardy explained his mixed emotions coming to the Assembly. This was the first time he would address people who represent the Cecilia Jeffrey School. On the one hand, he wanted to run. On the other,

he knew the time had come “to meet you, to speak about walking together, grieving and healing together, and to journey together toward wholeness.”

He said he does not believe litigation is the answer. That would lead to further distrust not reconciliation. The Journey to Wholeness Fund the Assembly has established encourages him.

Today, he said, he was extending his hand to those who meant well at the residential schools and grieved over what had happened there. “My hope is we will journey together,” he said. “Sometimes, we struggle. By the grace of God and his Son, we will overcome.”

The Assembly responded in a long, standing ovation, after which the Moderator offered Bishop Beardy a blessing and led the Assembly in prayer.

There is much despair over the divisions and violence in our communities and in our world. Much warrants our concern. We sometimes overlook events like this as somehow unimportant or on the periphery of life. We shall overcome. But only in ways like this.

Highlights there were, but most were not found within the business of the 125th General Assembly

John Congram

Volume CXXIII, No. 7
July/August 1999
ISSN 0032-7573

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FROM THE MODERATOR

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A Few Moderatorial Reflections

For the curious, let me begin with my reflections from “up front.” First of all, I find the level of concentration on immediate business all-consuming. What is the precise motion before us? Remember to call for the motion-as-amended or at least three people will remind me right away! Who is at which microphone and in what order? What is the principal clerk calling me to do on my very first night but break a tie by voting! I wonder if this or that moment is an appropriate time for table groups. Should I lead the Assembly in prayer now or remember to include this or that in my prayers at the close of the sederunt? The questions keep coming.

There are speakers to be thanked. Everyone requires a special response, but I don’t know what to say until I hear them speak. I am impressed by all of them, but especially moved by Bishop Gordon Beardy. As he speaks about his experience in a Presbyterian residential school, I feel pain (and shame) and I sorrow over how little we understand other cultures. This is a time for confession and supplication, for gratitude that a brother in Christ shares with such honesty, and for the grace we all need for the future.

But what is central is the participation of commissioners in the extensive reports prepared so carefully ahead of time. I am impressed by how such a diverse group of people can act like a prism to radiate different colours on a given issue and also on how, listening to one another, the church makes discerning decisions. I may not agree with every vote, but I set aside my own judgments in order to moderate as impartially as I can.

Between sederunts, I receive various comments. Someone prefers that I address God as “God of Jubilee” rather than “Jubilee God,” and I am grateful for the suggestion. Another person asks that attention be drawn to the Nunavut flag as “the only Canadian flag bearing the cross.” I repeat what I am told. Over lunch, I am gleefully reminded that a number of flags bear the St. Andrew’s cross and that what looks like a cross on the Nunavut flag is an *inukshuk*, the stone figure representing a person on the Arctic horizon! So much for passing on information without evaluating its accuracy! But Presbyterians are a forgiving lot and, while they respect the office of Moderator, they don’t regard it (or me) as unassailable — surely a sign of health!

On Sunday night, I speak of helping our church recover the biblical vision of Jubilee. Since we are approaching the year of our Lord 2000, we would do well to explore this challenging theme. I begin each sederunt with a Jubilee passage of Scripture, followed by a prayer based on that passage and ending with a Jubilee benediction. This is intended to give commissioners a taste of the message of Jubilee so central to Jesus’ ministry and to let the Assembly feel something of how radical this vision is in a culture shaped by market-driven economics.

Celebrating Jubilee calls for an imagination at odds with the thinking of the world around us. But it is a message of hope for the majority of the world crushed by the increasing gap between rich and poor. This is a profoundly spiritual issue. I hope to combine theological and economic thinking in my moderatorial year.

I am grateful for the support of the clerks of Assembly and especially for Stephen Kendall’s clear and thoughtful counsel. My wife, Rowena, and I feel encouraged by so many. We covet your prayers as we seek to serve our denomination together in the coming months.

JULY/AUGUST 1999 / PRESBYTERIAN RECORD

Published on the first of each month except August by The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

The *Presbyterian Record*, national magazine of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, is responsible to the General Assembly. It exists to publish issues relative to Christian faith and a selection of current and timely news analyses and opinions of interest or importance to Presbyterians across Canada.

Member of The Canadian Church Press and The Associated Church Press.

Publications Mail Registration No. 0264
Postage paid at Mississauga, Ontario.
Return postage guaranteed.
Send label only.

Subscription Rates

Individual: \$15
Every Home Plan (80% families subscribe): \$9
Club 50 Plan (50% families subscribe): \$11
U.S.A. and Foreign: \$20
Single Copies: \$2
All prices include GST.

Acceptance of advertising does not imply endorsement by the *Presbyterian Record* or The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Address all correspondence and changes of address (include label from magazine) to:

Presbyterian Record
50 Wynford Drive
Toronto, Ontario M3C 1J7
Phone: (416) 441-1111
Fax: (416) 441-2825

E-mail: pcrecord@presbyterian.ca
Web site: www.presbycan.ca/record

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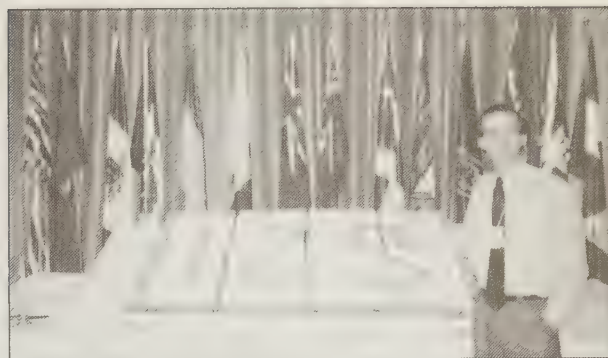
Our Cover

Moderator of the 125th General Assembly, Arthur Van Seters, with his wife, Rowena. Photo: David Hill.

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- Focusing on Mission: opportunities for involvement and learning
- Making sense out of the Bible in 30 hours
- The lay ministry revolution

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Deeply Moved

Cynthia Chenard's article "Out of the Depths: Remembering the Swissair Disaster" (May *Record*) moved me deeply. I'm not a literary critic, but I would certainly nominate this article for some literary award in the writing community. The anguish, compassion and hope she describes so well spoke volumes about the presence of Christ in that situation. Thank you for giving her story to us.

Glenn Mount,
Welland, Ont.

Practical Response to the Hog Crisis

The coverage in the April *Record* about the plight of hog producing families was more than disturbing, especially when coupled with the News item "Synod responds to farm crisis."

I recall reading, that of first world countries, Canadians pay the lowest price for a weekly shopping cartload when considered as a proportion of their weekly paycheque. The article also pointed out that, while we grumble only a little about \$200 running shoes and \$150 jeans and \$100 tickets to the latest must-see entertainment extravaganza — none of which we willingly do without

— don't anyone dare to raise the price of milk or the Sunday roast.

The synod item particularly annoyed me because most suggestions called on the victims of this crisis to help themselves without also suggesting ways we can help our neighbours. I would rather it had said the following:

- Friends, some of the farm families in our midst are suffering. Let's not let them isolate themselves. We have X hog producing families in our congregation; therefore, we need X other families to have them over for dinner on Friday night. And, maybe, the next few Friday nights, too. How about a picnic some Sunday after church since the chores are likely done then anyhow?
- Why not have an old-fashioned pork roast dinner, charge full price (say \$10/plate, no exceptions) with no profit expected since the organizers will have paid at least the cost of production for the hog. Lots of people in most churches would be willing to put on something like this. If enough

churches did so often enough, it might help.

- Those of us who like to put bulk purchases in our home freezers could consider paying the local producer the production price for a hog and arranging to have it butchered ourselves. It would be marginally more expensive than buying all that pre-packaged meat from the local grocer; but, at least, one would know who was getting the money.

None of these suggestions will affect the price of hogs at market one iota. But, at least, those among us who are suffering right now will be able to see that the rest of us are trying to help instead of expecting them to buck-up and "wait upon the Lord" as synod seems to be suggesting.

Linda Pearson,
Fergus, Ont.

Shorter letters are more likely to be published and less likely to be edited

Changing Homosexual Orientation

Myrtle Macdonald (Letters, May *Record*) offers thoughtful suggestions on how to help homosexual youth change

WATSON'S WORLD

Noel Watson



their orientation. Alas, to try to do so is to court disaster in a young person's life. Homosexuality is not something learned that can be unlearned. The combination of X and Y chromosomes doled out to us in the womb determines our sexual orientation. Changing that orientation is as impossible as changing the colour of one's skin or eyes.

However, behaviour is another matter. No one group has a monopoly on good or bad behaviour. Heterosexual youth can misbehave as much as homosexuals and lesbians. On the other hand, they can all show kindness, thoughtfulness and love.

We all need assurance that God loves us equally, whatever orientation we are born with.

*Jean Sonnenfeld,
Toronto*

Myrtle Macdonald is so wrong in her observation of the teen as a victim who was enticed. He was probably homosexual from birth and had, until then, never been shown any understanding of his physical being. I am afraid Myrtle still believes in myths and should meet our gay members and, with them, see how God unites us all.

*Joan M. Bell,
Toronto*

Repeating the Lachine Experience

The 1998 General Assembly was the fourth Assembly to deal with the problem of St. Andrew's Church in Lachine, Quebec. The story began when the 1994 Assembly, by an overwhelming majority, adopted the Report on Human Sexuality which said No to homosexual practice. The April 1995 Lachine call to Darryl Macdonald, really a challenge to that decision, was ruled *ultra vires* by the 1996 Assembly. However, neither the Presbytery of Montreal nor St. Andrew's accepted this ruling. Thus, the 1997 Assembly appointed a judicial commission.

The commission ruled in March 1998 that Macdonald was ineligible to occupy a pulpit in our church, and directed the presbytery to remove him. This was the

E. H. JOHNSON TRUST FUND 1999-2000 EXCHANGE

The 1999-2000 exchange, sponsored by the E. H. Johnson Memorial Trust Fund, will take place with the Church of Scotland. We expect to welcome visitors from Scotland in November 1999.

Applications are now invited for those wishing to represent The Presbyterian Church in Canada on a visit to Scotland in 2000. The visit will be approximately two weeks in May, with all travel, accommodation and meal expenses paid.

Applicants must be active members of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and hold, or have held, a leadership office in a congregation or in one of the courts of the church. They should be seeking an exposure to the life and witness of another church that will strengthen their sense of vocation and mission. They must be willing to share their experience with congregations on their return.

Applicants should write one page stating why they think an exchange to Scotland is important and why they believe taking part in such an exchange would strengthen their sense of vocation and mission. Please describe what you would hope to gain and contribute.

Applications/nominations should be directed to: Dr. Marjorie Ross, Secretary, E. H. Johnson Memorial Trust Fund, 50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, Ontario M3C 1J7.

Deadline for applications is October 31, 1999.

CALLS FOR NOMINATION

E. H. JOHNSON TRUST FUND 2000 AWARD

Each year, the Trustees of the E. H. Johnson Memorial Trust Fund name an individual to be the recipient of the E. H. Johnson Award given during the General Assembly.

Past recipients have included: Rev. Daniel Szabo (Hungary), Rev. Dr. C. M. Kao (Taiwan), Archbishop Desmond Tutu (Africa), Rev. Glenda Hope and Rev. John Fife (U.S.A.), Ms. Barbara Jackman and Rev. Russell Self (Canada). Rev. John Bell of the Iona Community, Scotland, is the 1999 recipient.

The Award is a recognition of the recipient's outstanding leadership to the Christian community at "the cutting edge of mission." The contribution should have significance on a national or international scale. The award is in the form of a medal and a certificate. It may be accompanied by a financial gift to the individual or to a cause or project suggested by the recipient.

Members and friends of The Presbyterian Church in Canada are invited to place one or more names in nomination for the year 2000 award. Please outline to the Trustees why the person nominated warrants the award.

Nominations should be directed to: Dr. Marjorie Ross, Secretary, E. H. Johnson Memorial Trust Fund, 50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, Ontario M3C 1J7; fax (416) 441-2825; or e-mail — mross@presbyterian.ca.

Deadline for nominations is October 31, 1999.

defining moment in the contest of wills. The clerks of Assembly issued warnings. But St. Andrew's stood firm. Members of presbytery spoke publicly in favour of what was then clearly a rebellion. Presbytery did nothing. The 1998 Assembly received recommendations about enforcement of discipline but, sadly, on the basis of a last-minute, emotion-driven amendment, opted to allow the congregation to leave the denomination and rent the building. This rental arrangement has not been and should not be consummated.

A question now hangs in the balance: Is our church strong enough to practise discipline, one of the essential marks of a true church? The signal sent by the decision of the 1998 Assembly is, if people are persistent and have society on their side, the church will have to change its No to Yes. What has happened at Lachine is the establishment of a beachhead. In the course of a few years, someone whose doctrine and practice are unacceptable by biblical, confessional and Assembly standards has succeeded in removing a congregation from our denomination. The legitimate work of our denomination at Lachine has been terminated.

People point to the fact that we would only be renting. But we would be renting a church and a pulpit to a person who, for moral reasons, has been barred from all our pulpits and to people who have persistently defied lawful authority. What is happening to our integrity as an institution? Are we not forfeiting our rights? Are we prepared for what the principle of legal precedence could require — repeating the Lachine process?

William Manson,
Montreal

Ministers Not Perfect

Regarding our Moderator's comments (May *Record*) on criteria for candidates for the ministry, how many people would pass muster? Outside of the two ministers acclaimed by the people in a contest held by this publication a year ago, most of us who are ordained would probably fail.

We don't live in a perfect world. The people God calls into ministry come out of this world with all of its sinfulness, shortcomings and dysfunctions. Yes, it would be wonderful if we could have the best and only the best presenting themselves as Ministers of Word and Sacraments. The church would thrive and Presbyterians could be the finest denomination in Christendom.

But that's a pipe-dream. As one examiner for the Reformed Church of America, perhaps having the toughest standards of any denomination, told me, there is no possible way to know how well any individual will function in the parish. The finest person who graduated from Knox College — the story goes — had to leave the parish within months because he couldn't take it.

The perfect minister doesn't exist. Rather, I think our guide should be the disciples. They were a mixed lot at best, and Jesus himself had a hard time with them. But when all was said done, they surpassed expectations.

Maybe we expect too much from our clergy. We are not super men and women but ordinary folk who have undertaken a vow to be as faithful as we can to a church God has called us to serve.

Rod Lamb,
Petawawa, Ont.

Simple Definition

Ted Sivers' discussion question in the April *Record* — "What do you mean [by debt] when you pray 'Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors'?" — has a simple, straightforward answer in the dictionary: *debt*, a sin (Bible) — *The Chambers Dictionary*.

Jim Stewart,
St. Andrew's, N.B.

The Empty Cross

Kathy Cawsey's observations (April *Record*) of the importance of the cross in relation to our calling as Christians is interesting. But isn't the realization, at least in the Presbyterian tradition, that the cross is empty (that is, without the body of a victim/victor) of singular importance

to our understanding of this historic symbol?

I appreciate the controversial promptings of Kathy's writings. A journalistic skill of no small value.

Fred Lake,
Windsor, Ont.

Remembering Dorothy Lake

The article on "Resurrection at Dorothy Lake" (April *Record*) brought back fond memories of one beautiful spring day in the mid-1970s. My wife and I spent a day there along with about 30 other volunteers preparing the camp for the summer season. The men built wooden floors for the tents while the women prepared a delicious dinner. It was a day I will never forget.

Howard Runnalls,
Whitby, Ont.

Who Is Attacking Whom?

Jeremy Ashton (Letters, May *Record*) complains our youth will be seduced by other powers such as science. Orthodox Christians continue to complain about science with such statements. My perception is the attack is in the other direction — orthodox Christians attack and make false statements about science.

Gordon Winder,
London, Ont.

Crime Doesn't Pay

The item in Recordings (May *Record*) about the cost of crime reminded me of growing up in Great Britain in the '40s. A series of shorts called *Crime Does Not Pay* was shown in all movie theatres. I cannot stress enough how important these little films were. They were a sombre warning of the cruelty inflicted on the vulnerable, usually for money, and the consequences for all.

Considering that crime is costing us \$46 billion annually, inflation aside, "Crime does not pay" is the understatement of the year. Perhaps, someone could look into reviving this series. The examples and the circumstances have not changed in the least.

Joy Armour,
Kemptonville, Ont.



The Rocks Beneath Us

Someone moved my rock. I suppose I have no right to call it "my rock." I didn't own that rock. I didn't even own the land the rock was on. It stuck out of an undeveloped slope at the end of a lane near our house. But it was just the right shape and the right height for me to sit on.

I first discovered my rock after I had a hernia operation a few years back. When I went out walking the dog, that rock was about as far as I could stagger before I had to stop for a rest. I would plant myself on it until I regained enough strength to go home again. I don't stop to rest on it much any more. But, still, I thought of it as my rock.

Then, one day recently, I walked by and discovered someone had dug it out and taken it away. I felt affronted. No one asked *me* about taking it away. No one consulted *me* on where it should go.

My reaction gives me some insight into some people's reactions when they find elements of their life or faith that they value suddenly changed by others. Like the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer*, for example. When the Anglican Church of Canada came out with its new *Book of Alternative Services*, many people felt betrayed. Now, they hadn't written the *Book of Common Prayer*. They weren't even around to have influenced it. Archbishop Cranmer did that way back in 1549. Aside from minor language updating, the last major revision was in 1662. So it would be hard to claim that anyone alive today *owned* that prayer book.

But it was familiar. People had sat in their pews and rested in its comfortable

cadences for generations. It let them gather strength to go back out into the world. It meant something to them. So many of them felt outraged. No one had asked *them* about the changes. No one had consulted *them* on what should happen to *their* liturgy. (Or, if someone had, they hadn't taken it seriously.) They felt as if someone had moved their rock.

The Catholic Church must have felt something similar during the Reformation. Luther and Zwingli, Calvin and Knox, Tyndale and Wycliffe tore the Bible from the sacred confines of the pulpit and gave it

to the people. Just as someone tore my rock from its hillside.

And I'd guess other people had much the same experience some 20 centuries ago at what the Christian Church calls Pentecost. Pentecost, according to the history written by Luke in the book of Acts, coincided with the Jewish festival of Shavuoth. Shavuoth, which comes seven weeks after Passover, commemorates God's gift of the Torah, the books of the Law, to the Jewish people.

But to those Jewish people, Pentecost must have felt like a massive affront. The Torah was the foundation of their faith, the rock on which their lives were built. They owned their very identity as a people to the Torah, with its interpretive commentaries, the Mishnah and the Midrash.

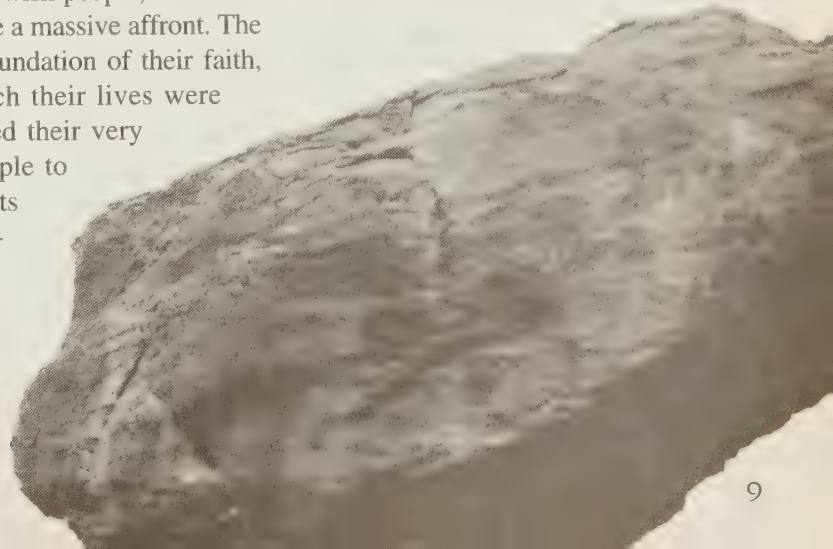
And this new group, later called Christians, wanted them to give their allegiance, their loyalty, not to the Torah but to a person. At Shavuoth, of all times.

That was the great gulf that eventually separated the new faith of Christianity from the historic Jewish community. Rabbi Jacob Neusner, who is (according to his book-jackets) the world's foremost authority on Judaism in the time of Christ, wrote a book about how he, as a rabbi, would respond to the call of Jesus. He would agree with much that Jesus said. It was a fresh and lively restating of many of the foundational principles of the Law. Often, it went beyond the letter of the Law to reveal its spirit, its underlying intent. But what Neusner could not have accepted then, and cannot accept now, is Jesus' call to "Follow *me*."

Instead of putting their faith in a set of instructions, God's commandments, and in the community built around those commandments, the Jews of Jesus' time were asked to put their faith in a person, God's human revelation, and the community that formed around him.

The Jews must have felt that someone had moved their rock, too. **R**

Jim Taylor is a writer, editor and co-founder of Wood Lake Books.





Authority, Preaching & Practice: Yes & No

Matthew 21:23-32

The first part of this passage (verses 23-27) is paralleled in the other three Gospels while the second part has no direct parallels. The question raised is that of authority and it is directed to Jesus: What was the source of his authority? What were Jesus' credentials? Who issued his business card? Earlier, Matthew notes that "[Jesus] taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes" (7:29).

This issue of the authority of Jesus begins in Matthew with the genealogy. The "begats" of Jesus' ancestry begin with Joseph and, in three groups of 14 names, lead to Jesus as the son of the patriarch Abraham and of King David. Jesus, it is implied, had the right lineage or pedigree to be the promised Messiah.

For Matthew, Jesus was a teacher "trained for the kingdom of heaven" (13:52). He was the new or "greater than" Moses. Note the parallels throughout the Gospel for both Jesus and Moses:

1. were spokesmen for God
2. had royalty present at their birth
3. successfully avoided a king's slaughter of babies
4. were exiled to and came "out of" Egypt
5. spent 40 days and nights in the wilderness
6. gave "the law" from a mountain.

Still, the authority of Jesus was not in himself but in his Author. In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus is God's show-and-tell, illustrating in word and deed God's love for his errant human family. This Jesus is a companion to share our weakness, a friend to carry our burdens, a guide to point the way. Jesus is the authority of

God wrapped in human shape and form.

"Who gave you this authority?" the Pharisees asked.

His answer was a question: "Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?"

No matter which way they answered, they would hurt their own case; so they replied, "We do not know."

And he said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things." If you aren't prepared for the answer, there is no point in answering the question!

The Pharisees, our brothers, were people who were strong on maxims, on laws, on preaching without practice. We should be able to identify with them. They were more willing to fight for their principles than to live them. Jesus advised his followers to follow their preaching but not their practice (23:2-8)! Paraphrasing E. Stanley Jones, it is only when the word becomes flesh that it shakes us like a passion and makes us new.

The second part of the reading includes a little parable about two sons. One said "Yes" to his father and did "No"; the other said "No" and did "Yes." Again, the Pharisees are faced with a question: Which one did the will of the father? Was it the one who "talked the talk" or the one who "walked the walk"? Who was, like the Pharisees, show without substance, preaching without practice?

The one who spoke and acted with authority reminded his followers that it is "cheap grace" to use the language of faith ("yes") but to do nothing ("no"). Somewhere, the Talmud reads: "Would

that they had forgotten My name and done that which I commanded of them." The smallest good deed is better than the grandest good intention!

In 1852, F. W. Robertson observed: "It is a perilous thing to separate feeling from acting; to have learnt to feel rightly without acting rightly."

"Truth is given, not to be contemplated but to be done. Life is an action, not a thought. And the penalty paid by him who speculates on truth is that by degrees the very truth he holds becomes to him a falsehood."

That "God is love" is true, but that "God so loved" is a truth that demands decision. "The first is an idea, the second is an event" (D. T. Niles). Practice is the stuff of character, the power of the risen Saviour to change the face of things. It is the triumph of integrity over scepticism. **R**

For Discussion and Reflection

- Unusual in the genealogy (Matthew 1:1-17) is the occurrence of five women — all but Mary are non-Jewish. These include: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba and Mary. What does this suggest about Jesus' pedigree?
- Is it possible that our faith is inoculated with the virus of our culture and is, therefore, more words that calm than deeds that challenge?
- Is Luke 15:11-32 an appropriate parallel to this passage?
- Reflect on Matthew 21:23-32 and the words of Mother Teresa that we are to be pencils in the hands of God, and it is for us only to be sharp and ready.

L. E. (Ted) Siverns is the minister of First Church in New Westminster, B.C.

Living on the Edge:

The Challenging Dilemma of the Multipoint Charge

Carol Smith

St. Giles Presbyterian Church, Moser River, has clung tenaciously to the eastern shore of Nova Scotia for many years. From the vantage point of the pulpit, with the front doors wide open, there is an incredible view of the Atlantic Ocean. For a long time, it was part of a three-point charge; but, in recent years, it has been on its own, with an occasional service for the faithful few. It seems life for this congregation is winding down and, with it, the Presbyterian witness in this rural community.

In these days, there are some congregations particularly vulnerable: the multipoint charges (MPC). The more congregations in each charge, the more vulnerable they are. Most MPC exist because of the reduced circumstances of a congregation. Presbyteries, with good intentions, create them to provide ministry for congregations that can no longer afford full-time clergy. For the short term, these congregations can continue. But for the long term, because one minister must serve a large area with multiple meetings and limited resources, there is almost always a slow and steady decline. Congregations rarely thrive in a multipoint charge. Many live on the edge of an uncertain future.

The dilemma of multipoint charges raises many theological questions, including what it means to be the church. Presbyterians often refer to John Calvin's definition: "The church is present when the Word is truly preached, the sacraments rightly administered, and as it orders its life according to the word of God" (*Living Faith*, 7.1.6). Congregations in the MPC can provide worship, including preaching and sacraments, but are less able to order their life according to the word of God. Such aspects as Christian nurture for all ages and outreach to the surrounding community be-

come difficult in most MPC. The Body of Christ suffers because of the difficulty in building up the Body.

In earlier days, "galloping ministers" rode on horseback from village to village conducting services. The automobile relieved this somewhat for the modern minister. Nevertheless, being the sole minister to a number of churches is a difficult undertaking. Many MPC call newly ordained ministers into a situation that does not allow much opportunity for practising the theories learned in the classroom. Juggling a multipoint charge takes its toll on clergy, and burn-out and shortened ministries often result.

Limited resources mean difficulty in maintaining church buildings. Renovating to suit modern needs can also be beyond many small churches. Survival can become the mode of operation. Presbyteries sometimes question why some smaller congregations do not prepare a budget for the upcoming year. For some who have survived on the bare minimum for so long, the ability to envision a brighter future has been lost.

Baxter Presbyterian Church in Ontario has been part of a three-point charge for many years. About 40 people attend worship on a Sunday morning. It is the only church in a growing community that has expanded to include subdivisions. Alongside the traditional farming families, many others who make their living in a variety of ways have moved to the area. The members of Baxter Church have worked hard to keep their doors open. Limited resources have made it difficult to include outreach to the community. For example, the church school shows signs of growth but the space available

limits the number of children who can be accommodated. The potential for growth is there, but will it happen within the present structure of a three-point charge?

There are no easy answers to this question. However, if the present trend contin-

ues, many congregations in MPC will quietly drop out of sight. Death and rebirth are part of the cycle of congregations, and it would be naïve to think all congregations should continue. Some congregations will conclude their ministries for good reasons. But what about the congregations well-placed to grow and become a vital

Christian presence in their communities?

Presbyteries need to develop ways to assist small churches. Some presbyteries have rural ministry committees. But the dilemma needs to receive more attention at the national level. The National Rural Ministry Committee of Canada Ministries is currently located in the Synod of the Atlantic Provinces. How will it assist MPC? Should a national survey of rural churches be conducted to assess present and future needs? Commissioners who come to General Assembly from smaller churches need to speak out and ask questions.

Is it time for rural congregations with the potential for growth to be treated the same as new extension congregations? Courts of the church need to focus more energy on these congregations. **R**

Carol Smith is minister of the Cookstown, Baxter and Ivy pastoral charge in Ontario.

What are your suggestions for meeting the needs of multipoint charges? Send them to us. We will print as many as possible.

My dear editor:

While strolling through a local mall not long ago, I noticed — in one of those stores that sell everything from wind chimes to potpourri — monthly calendars printed on a washable plastic and personalized “Angela’s Schedule,” “Zachary’s Schedule,” etc. It dawned on me, with a chill in the recognition, that these were a child’s version of those slab-like daily planners carted around by the 60-hour workweek crowd.

Ye (false) gods and little fishes!

Are little fingers now “pencilling in” a birthday party with the provision “Have your people get in touch with my people”? Are purveyors of children’s clothing now making cut-down versions of power suits? Will Angela and Zachary be careful to save “quality time” for pets (or parents) between hockey school, ballet classes and seminars on “Investing for Pre-Teens — Retirement Freedom at Forty!”?

But I suppose I shouldn’t be surprised. For some time now, I have been a bemused witness to the anxiety of the clergy, particularly the young clergy, to appear as martyrs to their hectic schedules. Now, I am the first to admit parish ministry makes many demands, and odd-hour demands, too. It is one of those callings where little is ever “wrapped up” once and for all. More taxing still, it is a vocation wherein “success” is a more ambiguous, non-quantifiable thing. Even attendance and money are less than accurate indicators, depending on where the pastoral charge happens to be. Many modern clergy don’t have the option available to Christ’s disciples of “shaking the dust off [their] feet” (or the tires of the moving van) and leaving unreceptive or uncongenial pastorates, especially when the spouse is well and happily employed.

But the cultivation of the smile of weary forbearance, the promise to “try to find two or three minutes” to do something and the wounded testimony that protests an 80-hour workweek (that must

include the hours when the telephone by the bed *could* have rung) are a bit much. Some have even taken to carrying those overnight-bag planners (though they still can’t “pencil in” funerals) and cellular phones. I even know of one instance when the phone-bearer left instructions to be called during presbytery so he could make a conspicuous, worried-face exit ... and not because of the more understandable desire for escape. Did he want us to think he had an emergency passport signing? Was Heaven finally returning his calls?

Clergy seem anxious to be martyrs to a hectic schedule

The quaint (to some) insistence of the minister’s remuneration being called a “stipend” instead of a salary is not merely evidence of the church’s preference for the sound of an antique drum. A stipend is designed to free the recipient from the hurly-burly of earning a living in order to pursue a non-“bottom-line” function. Surely, part of that function lies in obeying the injunction to “Be still and know that I am God” — and not only while surfing the Net.

Or, we can simply yield to the spirit of the time, I suppose. Instead of spinning out the string of listless summer Sundays, why not have worship services for eight days running at the end of June or early in July? We could call it “Ye Olde-Fashioned Camp Meeting” or something, then close down for the summer in (relatively) good conscience. Not only could we save the cost of pulpit supply and avoid the pretence of “shared services” with some other church, for eight days the clergy could actually be as harassed as they feel! And I haven’t even considered the possibility of renting the facilities to some Department of Culture and Recreation program — “Puppet Making as Therapy” or “Celtic Culture in Three Weeks” and that kind of thing.

And why stop with summer? The next time we have a vision to live or a second century to advance or a national fund to develop, why not ask for money

to provide substantial grants for every member to assist them in buying a computer? Not only would our membership figures rise, but the technology already exists to provide an electronic, on-line worship service that could be downloaded at the convenience of the worshipper. All Sunday deadline pressures would be eliminated. It would be possible, at the press of a key, to select the kind of music — deadlly dull, traditionally invigorating, Christian pop or Christian alternative. (Incidentally, what is this “alternative” category? Isn’t every kind of music an alternative to another kind?)

If the network were wide enough, and there is no reason why it couldn’t be, worshippers could log on to the style of preaching they prefer: heart-wrenching, mind-numbing, exegetical, expository, feel-good, feel-guilty, a joke and three points and a poem, etc. We might have to redefine “pastoral charge” more along the lines of “ratings,” but many already do. Electronic banking is a reality so there should be no difficulty with the offering.

If some were to object “But it wouldn’t feel like church!” we could provide a stained glass screen-saver and ask Apple to make a Macintosh in a tartan or in Presbyterian blue.

The sacraments would require some assembling of ourselves together, but would those occasional gatherings not enhance the celebration? And I admit there is one other component that could not be provided for on the information highway — the coffee hour.

If, as a bishop in the Church of England once complained, “The trouble with the Church is there are far too many people in it,” would my modest proposal not alleviate the stress?

Yours for productive stillness, and may you and your readers have some this summer,

Peter Plymley II

A Labour of Love and Light

by Gwyneth Whilsmith

Question: What do you get when you add a large dose of artistic talent to a deep commitment to faith and church? Answer: A beautiful stained glass window. At least, that's how it was with Tom Shackleton of Knox Church in Bayfield, Ontario.

Tom, a retired mathematics high school teacher, and a perfectionist in detail and design, pursued his interest in stained glass about 10 years ago. Despite the fact it is an exacting and unforgiving hobby, he found it relaxing to score and shape pieces of glass. He's perfected his techniques and expertise until his exquisite works of art, such as lamps, hanging shades, miniature lighthouses and church buildings, are in much demand.

When he and his wife, Joan, joined Knox, Bayfield, a few years ago, his attention was immediately caught by three small arched windows in the chancel that still held the original plain glass from the 1930s when the church was built. It struck him that stained glass in those windows would enhance the sanctuary. Drawing up meticulous plans, he presented them to the session and asked if it would grant him and his wife the pleasure of donating the windows at no cost. Session happily agreed.

In soft tones of rose, mauve and green, he executed three small contemporary-design windows using doves and lilies in the resurrection theme.

More recently, when Knox Church received a bequest from longtime members Russell and Gladys Heard, the congrega-

tion thought it fitting that part of the inheritance be used to install a stained glass window at the back of the church as a memorial. Although it was larger than anything Tom had tackled before, he drew up detailed plans, carrying out the same theme as the smaller windows, and presented them for the congregation's approval.

The large original window, seven feet by six feet, faced Bayfield's Main Street and was made up of 34 individual panes.

A retired schoolteacher employs his talents in beautifying the sanctuary of his congregation

Tom decided to use the original sash; but, since no two panes of glass were exactly the same size, templates had to be made for every piece of glass. Each pane was designed individually and installed separately to comprise the overall picture.

The window features several types of glass, both in texture and colour. All pieces were hand-cut, wrapped with copper foil and soldered together. "It's like putting together a jigsaw puzzle," Tom explains.

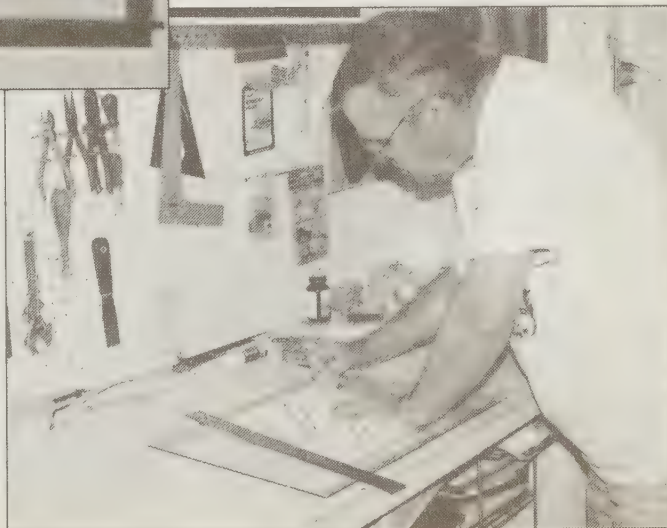
After 200 hours of intensive labour, the window was ready for installation. In November 1997, it was dedicated to the glory of God. The memorial window is a beautiful reminder of a committed couple who faithfully served the church in past years. And it is also a reflection of a man, Tom Shackleton, who serves the same church today with his extraordinary gift. **R**

Gwyneth Whilsmith is an author and member of Knox Church in Bayfield, Ont.



Above: The finished window — *Resurrection*.

Right: Creating the individual templates.



125th
General Assembly
June 6 - 11, 1999
Kitchener, Ontario

125 and counting ...

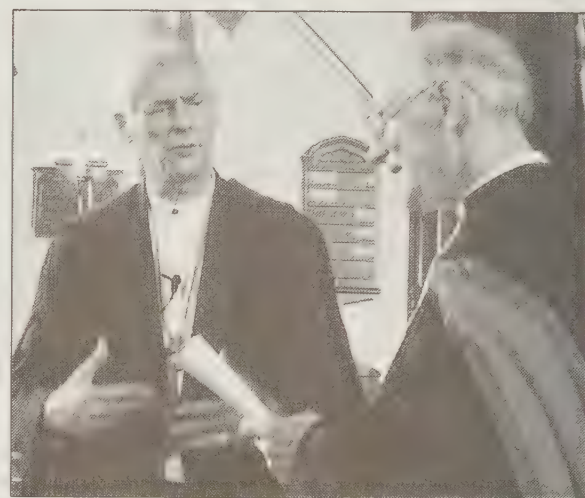
by John
Congram

Moderator sees bright future for the church

The out-going Moderator, William Klempa, spoke to a packed church at the opening worship of the 125th General Assembly in Kitchener, Ontario's downtown St. Andrew's Church. He compared our present situation to that of Joshua and the children of Israel approaching the Promised Land. Both are asked to go where they have not gone before. The words of Joshua, "Be strong and courageous," are meant for us, too. If we respond, the future will be bright.

Klempa stated we should approach the new century with humility. The church had been too optimistic at the beginning of this century. A popular magazine, *The Christian Century*, still witnesses to the hope Christians held for the century. "We need to put behind us the 100 years of wars, many of them religious, and ask God for forgiveness," Klempa said. We are called to practise forgiveness in the year of Jubilee.

He expressed the conviction that Canada still needs a biblical and Christ-centred church. In 1925,



Moderator Art Van Seters (left) thanks the out-going Moderator, William Klempa, for his year.

Presbyterians did not say no to unity but to a unity that failed to bind us to our confessions. He expressed the belief that trendiness goes hand-in-hand with decline. Churches that hold to Reformed theology prosper, as he had witnessed in Eastern Europe.

Klempa said he was pleased both the Church of Scotland and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are making mission a priority. The FLAMES initiative calls us to do the same. He noted that both The Presbyterian Church in Canada and The United Church of Canada are approximately the same size today as in 1925. "We need to become a purpose-focused church, to downplay Christianity and concentrate on the gospel."

"You must all believe in grace or how else would I have become Moderator." With those words, Arthur Van Seters greeted the Assembly after being installed as Moderator of the 125th General Assembly. After paying tribute to his home congregation, Armour Heights in Toronto, and announcing its minister as his chaplain for the Assembly, he turned to matters of dress. He said he might have worn the T-shirt given to him by



Rev. Grant MacDonald conducts opening worship at St. Andrew's Church, Kitchener, Ontario.



East meets West: Barbara MacDonald (Glace Bay, N.S.) and Judy Szasz (Nanaimo, B.C.).

Knox College students which had emblazoned on it, "If you ain't Dutch, you ain't much." But it wouldn't fit. The college encouraged him to wear his principal's gown although he is no longer the principal. He also wore a small wooden cross from India given to him by missionary Pauline Brown. He would wear it as a constant reminder of the suffering Indian Christians face today.

When the Assembly turned to business, Van Seters quickly faced breaking a tied vote. "Do I deserve this?" he exclaimed.

Before the Assembly began, a rumour circulated that the sanctuary was air-conditioned. The large number of sweaty bodies and the bright television lights conspired to leave this promise limp on the floor — the first, but not the last hope of this Assembly to go unrealized. By 10 p.m., commissioners were ready to slither out of their pews into the humid night air to seek refreshments in various parts of the church or to head for their rooms at the University of Waterloo.

For whom the Bell toils

"For good or for evil," according to John Bell, this year's recipient of the E. H. Johnson Award, "what we sing is what we end up believing." So why are church people against change? he asked the audience. Because they sing hymns about a changeless God and a changeless church. He pointed to a line in "Abide With Me" — "Change and decay in all around I see" — that forges "the association of change with decay through our hymnody." In fact, what the church needs most today is a theology of change rooted in the Resurrection. In the Resurrection, God declares, "Change or die."

Bell is a minister in the Church of Scotland. Since his ordination in 1978, he has served as youth adviser in the Presbytery of Glasgow and, subsequently, as youth co-ordinator and worship resource worker of the Iona Community. Several

of his hymns appear in our latest *Book of Praise*. Much of his work has been with disadvantaged folk in poor urban areas.

With humour and delightful examples, he hammered home the fact that faith is shaped and communicated by what we say, especially what we say in church.

Bell's brief address began and ended with him teaching, then leading the group in singing a chorus in three-part harmony without accompaniment. In a magical few moments, he illustrated what he had talked about. For that alone, he deserved this award. The E. H. Johnson Award is given annually to someone engaged in mission "on the cutting edge."

Bell intends to return to Canada in November to conduct a series of workshops on worship for The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Ecumenical visitors

Hae Joong Kyung is the first woman ordained by the Korean Christian Church in Japan (KCCJ) and the first woman Moderator of any Asian church. She noted that her church has existed 90 years, 70 of those years in partnership with The Presbyterian Church in Canada. As a small denomination, she said, there are things it can do "to promote harmony in Korea." She thanked Canadian Presbyterians for supporting her church's work in seeking the reunification of Korea. Rev. Young Il Kang, the general secretary of the KCCJ, accompanied the Moderator.

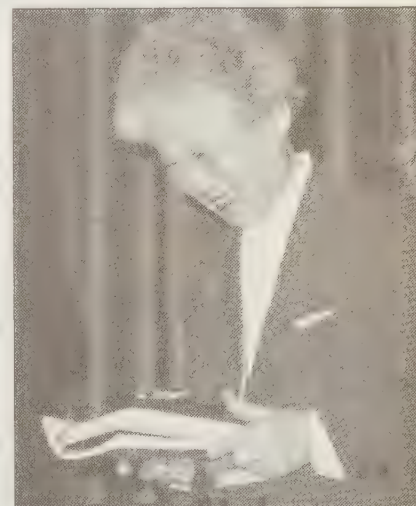
Rev. James Peter Jones introduced Brigadier General, the Ven. Gerald Peddle, Anglican minister and chaplain general of the Canadian Forces. Peddle noted that, as he spoke, Canadians were on their way to Macedonia — including two chaplains. At present, 140 chaplains serve the regular Forces. He said he sees his role as head of an ecumenical team to which each chaplain brings his or her own identity and shares it in what, for many, becomes a transforming experience.

Rev. Eui-Woong Yu, Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Korea (PCK), addressed the Assembly. He thanked Canadian Presbyterians for sending missionaries to Korea in the past and praised our meaningful relationship today. The PCK has adopted a theme for entering the next century: "Earth as a community of life, where all creation lives together in harmony for the glory of God." He reported a "mood of reconciliation" among the various branches of Presbyterianism in Korea, his branch strongly favouring unity in the



"From December 1997 to February 1998, more than 2,300 people took their own lives due to the impact of the financial upheaval in South Korea."

— Committee on International Affairs



Rev. Hae Joong Kyung, first woman Moderator of the Korean Christian Church in Japan.

125th General Assembly

"... there are sufficient material resources, know-how and people to make a poverty-free world a reality in less than a generation. Redistributing only 0.5 per cent of global income would be enough to meet the basic needs of 1.3 billion of the world's poorest people."

— Committee on International Affairs

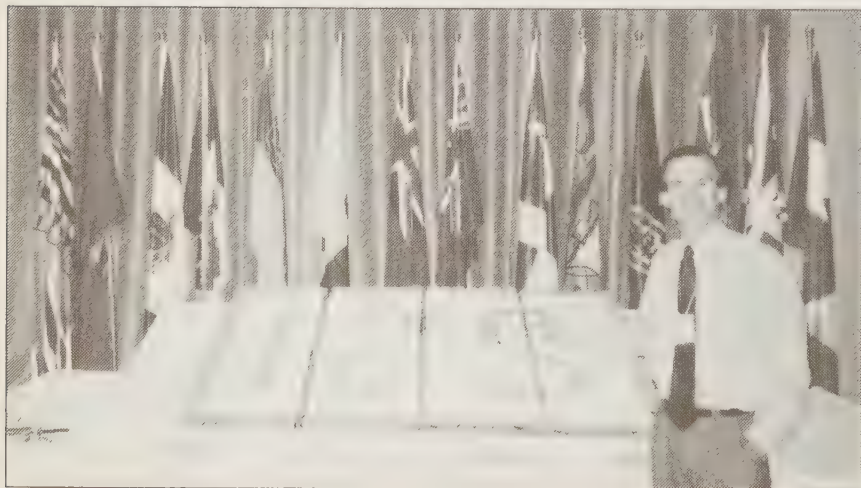
future. The PCK believes the government should stop its economic sanctions against North Korea and work for reconciliation and peace between the two Koreas. He expressed appreciation for the care Canadian Presbyterians have shown toward North Korea.

Phillip King, a minister of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa, New Zealand, is on a year's exchange with a United Church congregation. He gave a humorous account of adjusting to life in Canada in the winter. He brought greetings from "a land of three and one-half million people and 60 million sheep." He said his denomination is concentrating on congregations as the primary unit of mission but is also wrestling with the same issues we are — biblical authority and sexuality.

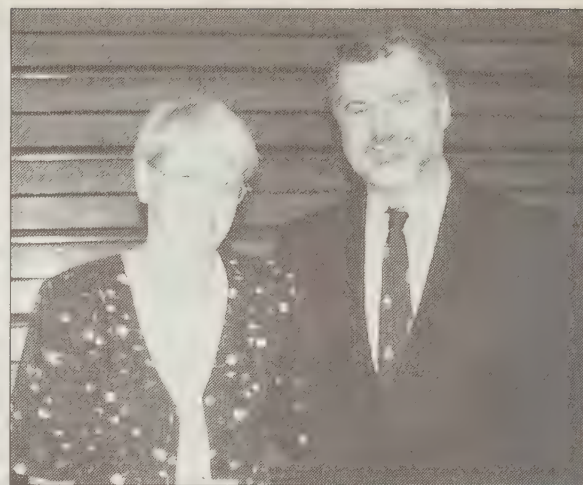
Benebo Fubara-Manuel, a minister of the Presbyterian Church in Nigeria, is a scholarship student of The Presbyterian Church in Canada studying at Calvin Seminary in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He spoke of the continuing economic and social difficulties in Nigeria. He pointed to the irony that, "although Nigeria is one of the world's five largest oil producers, it takes half a month's pay of a graduate to fill up his car with gas." He spoke of the revived hope Nigerians have in the re-establishment of a fragile democracy led by a Christian president. When he returns to Nigeria, he said he would report that "the various tribes that make up The Presbyterian Church in Canada get along quite well."

Visser's vision

John Vissers was unanimously endorsed as the new principal of The Presbyterian College, Montreal. He has served in a number of congregations, most recently as senior minister of Knox Church on Spadina Avenue in Toronto. Since 1987, he has served on the faculty of Tyndale Seminary (formerly Ontario Theological Seminary) where he taught systematic theology. His thesis for his doctoral degree was on the theology of Walter W.



"Do you people eat like this all the time?" Rev. Phillip King from the Presbyterian Church in New Zealand views the 125th anniversary cake.



Rev. Dorcas Gordon, principal of Knox College, Toronto, welcomes Rev. John Vissers, the new principal of The Presbyterian College, Montreal.

Bryden, a former principal of Knox College and leader in the church after the Church Union controversy of 1925.

Vissers says he looks forward "to participating in the theological education of our students. My vision for the college," he says, "is that it be strengthened as an evangelical and ecumenical centre in the Reformed tradition." He also hopes the college will become known as a centre for the development of leaders for the 21st century.

And justice for all

The late Rev. John Robson spent most of his ministry fighting the demons of Toronto's inner city. In a unique move, the Committee on International Affairs dedicated its report to his memory. In the words of Carol Smith, the convener, John was "a passionate advocate of global justice."

The report began with an exposition of the Beatitudes under the title "Signs of the Kingdom." It then addressed the issues of trade and human rights, asking the Canadian government to make human rights central to its policy.

The report requested prayer and support for a number of countries, such as Malawi and India, struggling with debt, poverty and civil unrest.

The committee added to the vast array of letters the Moderator has been requested to write on behalf of the church. Among these is one to the minister of foreign affairs urging the Government of Canada to use its position on the United Nations Security Council to search for creative initiatives to end the impasse over Iraq. He will also write to urge the federal government to reinvigorate the peace process in Sudan.

Applause greeted the convener's announcement, during the presentation of her report, that a peace agreement had been reached in Kosovo. The Moderator led the Assembly in prayer for all parties involved in this conflict, including Canadian



soldiers and chaplains. The Presbyterian Church had already spoken out about this conflict with other members of the Canadian Council of Churches (see News, June *Record*).

Don't bet on it!

In September 1998, our church and other members of the Canadian Council of Churches wrote to Canada's justice minister, Anne McLellan, recommending that the federal government establish a national and independent task force to review the impact of state-sponsored gambling. The minister replied that the government has no plans to establish such a task force.

The Assembly recommended that, where relevant, synods and presbyteries write to provincial



Fred Fenkner, from First Church, Nelson, B.C., assisted by Rev. Alan McPherson of Hamilton, Ont., displays the flag of the new Territory of Nunavut.

premiers stating the church's opposition to video lottery terminals, other forms of electronic gambling, and the proposed introduction of dice games and betting on cruise ships. The Assembly also agreed the Moderator should write to the prime minister strongly recommending that the federal government establish a task force to assess the social, ethical, legal and economic impact of the expansion in gambling.

A just resolution

The Presbytery of East Toronto requested the General Assembly to set up a commission to deal with the perceived injustices in the dismissal of Lee McKenna duCharme as associate secretary of Justice Ministries of the Life and Mission Agency in April 1997. However, citing questions about the accuracy of some items in the overture and whether or not the full process had been carried out, the committee on bills and overtures recommended the matter be referred to the Assembly Council for resolution and report to the next Assembly.

Rev. Bill Middleton (East Toronto) spoke of "the arduous process" through which the presbytery had gone over this matter. He said the presbytery had

been accused of "flying in the face of the Assembly." He assured commissioners that nothing could be further from the truth. The presbytery had acted out of deep pastoral concern for Ms. duCharme "who had felt diminished, indeed destroyed" through what had happened. The presbytery was simply seeking justice for her, justice that appeared to have been denied. He believed that giving the matter to the Assembly Council would delay action.

The Assembly agreed, appointing a commission to investigate carefully and bring the matter to a speedy, just and final resolution.

Religion and the CBC

The session of First Church, Regina, with the support of the presbyteries of Assiniboia and Northern Saskatchewan, asked the Assembly to consider CBC-TV's actions in deleting religious programming such as *Hymn Sing* and *Meeting Place* from its schedule.

The Assembly appointed a committee that reported later in the week. The committee recognized that many cuts may have been driven by economic factors and that many Canadians now have access to specialty channels such as Vision TV and Crossroads. As well, specialty channels of the CBC such as Newsworld carry some religious programming. Yet, many Canadians still do not have access to these specialty channels. Therefore, the committee believes the CBC has an obligation to carry some religious programs on its main network. It therefore asked the Moderator to write a letter of concern regarding the lack of religious programs on the main network of the CBC and urged sessions to do the same.

Retiring

- Geoffrey Johnston, director of pastoral studies, The Presbyterian College, Montreal, after 14 years.
- Helen Goggin, professor of Christian education, Knox College, Toronto.
- Raymond Humphries, professor of New Testament language and literature, Knox College, after 20 years.
- Arthur Van Seters, principal of Knox College, after six years.

"If some are expendable, soon all will be expendable for one reason or another."

— Margaret Nally, Mary's Place (a shelter for women and children), speaking during morning worship



The congregation gathers at St. Andrew's Church for opening worship.

125th General Assembly

Dollars and sense

In 1998, the church experienced a \$1,383,611 "surplus" due largely to the fact that Assembly had determined it was no longer necessary for *Presbyterians Sharing...* to contribute to the pension fund. In response, the Assembly Council presented a list of 29 projects. It included items such as an administrator for mission tours, a legal defense fund, scholarships for pastors in Africa, an update of the social action handbook plus a wide variety of other events and projects in both Canada and overseas.

Photo: Ian MacCready



"Waiter, tables for 300, please." Main venue of sessions, showing commissioners in table groups.

Many commissioners seemed unhappy with this approach. Rev. Tom Rodger (Presbytery of Sarnia) proposed that, in the spirit of Jubilee, the Moderator name a special committee to distribute these funds in ways to help the needs of the poor, hungry and homeless in Canada, and that all funds be expended by the end of 2001.

Rev. Beth McCutcheon (Winnipeg) proposed that 50 per cent be given to overseas projects and 50 per cent to mission in Canada, the latter to be distributed to synods on a percentage basis of their contributions to *Presbyterians Sharing...* in 1998.

A number of commissioners spoke to the amendments. Rev. Joyce Davis (Pickering) argued that the intent of the amendments would be fulfilled through the original list proposed by the Assembly Council. Rev. Will Ingram (West Toronto) said that, during the debate, he had tried to balance vigilance and trust. He believed we must trust the Assembly Council that is made up of representatives of the whole church. Rev. Ian Morrison (Pickering) said he despaired when he sees amendments like these. We are trying to make the Assembly do things that have been mandated to other bodies, he argued. "Both amendments," Rev. Stephen Farris (Pickering) commented, "are full of good intentions but good intentions are never good enough." He said that, although he might not agree

with some of the items in the list, a representative group from the church, that knows the larger picture, had drawn it up.

Both amendments were then decisively defeated. A further amendment to give half to Presbyterian World Service and Development and half to the Assembly Council also went down to defeat.

After several hours of spirited debate, the original motion passed.

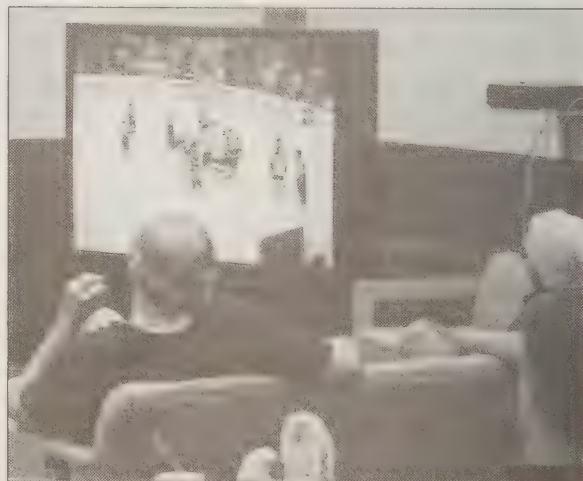
When it came to adopting the budget for 2000, normally a routine event, commissioners spoke of giving back to the congregations the money that would previously have been collected through *Presbyterians Sharing...* for the pension fund. Rev. Alan McPherson (Hamilton) said that, when people in his congregation first questioned him about these funds, he assured them they would be returned in some form to the congregation. He believes this is the only just thing to do and, so, proposed that the budget for 2000 be reduced by \$650,000 from congregational contributions. Rev. Patricia Van Gelder (Lanark and Renfrew) said her whole ministry had been with small congregations who had never been able to meet their *Presbyterians Sharing...* budget despite their best efforts. If this motion were passed, it would give them that opportunity. Others spoke of this as an opportunity to put money back into the hands of congregations for mission.

The motion to reduce the budget in 2000 by \$650,000 passed by a large majority.

Plus all the jellied salads you can eat

The Assembly agreed to increase the minimum stipend for ministers as of January 1, 2000, by \$575 (two per cent of the fourth level minimum stipend). This will also apply to executive and support staff of the General Assembly and to professional staff at the colleges.

A recommendation from the Assembly Council to raise the salary of the principal clerk, chief financial officer and general secretary of the Life and Mission Agency 10 per cent as of July 1, 1999,



"No score, first sederunt, er, period."

"Congregational giving to *Presbyterians Sharing...* in 1998 was \$8,584,680, which is an increase of \$90,000, or one per cent, over the previous year."



and that of associate secretaries five per cent as of January 1, 2000, proved more controversial. This increase would be on top of adjustments for inflation and cost of living and would be considered an interim measure.

These recommendations arose out of a study of compensation for all positions at church offices being undertaken by the Personnel Policy Committee of the Assembly Council. They found that base stipends in church offices are well below the average first quartile reported stipends for clergy in the Toronto area.

Rev. Glenn Cooper (Pictou) argued he was not sure "the ministries of church offices need to be among the highest paid of our congregational clergy. He also said he feared the church was moving away "from our understanding of servants in the church toward a model that is patterned after corporate Canada." He also worried about giving general secretaries an increase while getting to support staff "some time in the future." Any increase should await the final review being undertaken by the Personnel Policy Committee.

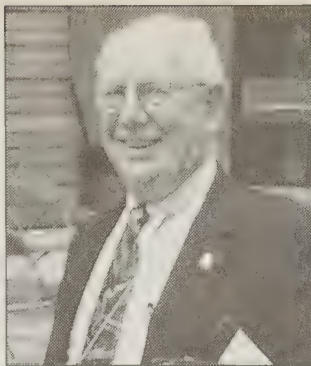
He moved that the two recommendations be referred back to the Assembly Council in consultation with the Committee on Church Doctrine. Assembly agreed by a narrow margin.

Pensions rising

Under normal circumstances, when the Pension and Benefits Board reports, many commissioners yawn and go for coffee. This year was different. Most commissioners were aware *Presbyterians Sharing...* has a huge "surplus" due in large part to the fact it no longer contributes to the church pension plan. It's not that the pension plan no longer needs this money, but a larger amount will come from the employer and employee.

In a complex and convoluted report, the Pension Board reported that, since 1989, the maximum pensionable earnings had been calculated at less than minimum remuneration when travel allowance is taken into account. As a result, pensions for those retiring since 1989 and through to 2003, or for their dependants, have not been as high as they should have been. Assembly agreed to pay these arrears without interest by December 31, 1999. The cost of doing this will reduce the surplus in the pension plan by about \$3.7 million.

In an odd turn of events, the convener of the Pension and Benefits Board, Crawford Laing, indicated he could not support all the recommendations of the board. The main point of contention



Crawford Laing, convener of the Pension and Benefits Board, smiles after the adoption of his committee's report.

was how fast the contributions of members and congregations should rise to six per cent and three per cent of the dollar base respectively. Despite a healthy surplus in the plan, Laing favoured a slightly faster rise in rates to the higher figures in order to ensure the integrity of the fund. After a lengthy and, at times, confusing debate, the Assembly sided with the convener.

Members' contributions to the pension fund will be 4.4 per cent in 2000 and rise to six per cent by 2004. Meanwhile, contributions by

congregations were set at 2.2 per cent for 2000, rising to three per cent by 2004.

The new way of calculating maximum pensionable income since 1989, taking into account additional benefits, will now be applied to all those receiving pensions and will mean an overall increase for all those receiving benefits from the plan.

Numbers, Chapter 1

Rev. Clyde Ervine (West Toronto) drew the Assembly's attention to the statistical report for the past year that indicated an alarming decline in membership from 143,784 in 1997 to 136,289 in 1998 (as of May 25, 1999). He pointed out this was a significant statistical decline and proposed that the Life and Mission Agency convene a study group to research the causes of the decline and present proposals for the recovery of congregational health to the 2001 Assembly.

Donald Johnson (Brandon) argued we already know the causes; the issue is to take action. Others echoed that view. Rev. Bruce Miles (Winnipeg) suggested we should accept our vocation as "a limping church." In the end, the motion passed by a narrow margin with the proviso added that the study should cover the past five years.

Although not mentioned during the Assembly,



Born to be mild. Art Wiebe, an elder from Vernon, B.C., rode his motorcycle to General Assembly.

"Perhaps psychological testing should come at the end of theological training to make sure the process has not been reversed."

— John Ufkes, student representative from Knox College

125th General Assembly

**"Unless we hear
the voices of all
in our society,
we will not hear God."**

— Brice Balmer,
Mennonite pastor and
chaplain at Kitchener's
House of Friendship,
speaking during
morning worship



Rev. Walter Allum does his Darth Maul impression dressed in napkins to ward off the air-conditioning.

Briefly noted

- The position of associate secretary of the General Assembly office, currently held by Barbara McLean, was restored to a full-time position as of July 1.
- February 27, 2000, has been designated Journey to Wholeness Sunday.
- As of General Assembly, gifts to Kosovo relief through Presbyterian World Service and Development amounted to \$253,000.
- Presbyterians donated \$630,000 for Central America in the wake of Hurricane Mitch. This is the largest response to an appeal in the history of Presbyterian World Service and Development.
- Total givings by Presbyterians to the Canadian Foodgrains Bank have risen from \$155,439 in 1996 to \$437,398 in 1998.
- In 1998, *Presbyterians Sharing...* allocated \$790,000 to theological education, divided as follows: Knox College, Toronto, \$553,000 (70%); St. Andrew's Hall, Vancouver, \$110,600 (14%); The Presbyterian College, Montreal, \$126,400 (16%).
- In Canada in 1998, three new congregations were started; in 1999, four.
- Rowena and Arthur Van Seters celebrated their 41st anniversary by attending the Monday night banquet and responding to the tinkling glasses of the guests.
- Assembly extended a vote of appreciation to Judee Archer Green for her work in worship and music while serving in an interim position with the Life and Mission Agency.
- The Assembly agreed to ask the Committee on Ecumenical Relations in consultation with the Committee on Church Doctrine to explore membership in the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada.

congregations tend to be slow in reporting their statistics. Part of the decline may have resulted from a particularly slow response.

Sic transit gloria

No longer will members of Presbyterian Church courts be required to know or learn Latin. No longer will they be able to hold *pro re nata* meetings or meet in *hunc effectum*, to alter the *res gestae* of the meeting or to act *pro tempore*, or to hold a minister's presbytery certificate *in retentis*. In presenting this part of the clerk's report, the deputy clerk, Tony Plomp, commented he hoped his motion would not be ruled *ultra vires*.

The Assembly gave the clerks of Assembly permission to go through the Book of Forms and replace Latin phrases with equivalent English ones. Only one halfhearted voice was raised against this proposal. Through this action, the Presbyterian Church will make it clear to the whole world that it has entered the 17th century. It will also take much of the fun out of church courts.

No papal bull

Some are aware that the Westminster Confession of Faith speaks of the pope in less than flattering terms, suggesting he might be the Antichrist. Two overtures called for a change in the language the confession uses to describe both the pope and the Roman Catholic Church.

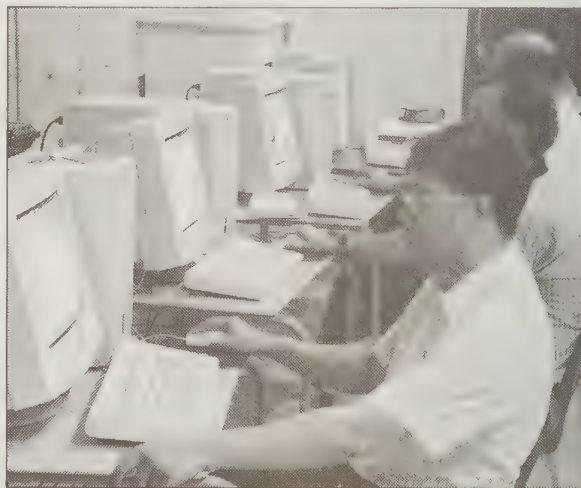
Some commissioners argued we should amend the confession or, at least, place a footnote indicating the references to the pope and the Roman Catholic Church were historically conditioned and do not apply today.

Speaking for the Committee on Church Doctrine, Rev. Paul Brown said that, although committee members are unanimous in believing something should be done, they are not yet sure what. He said it has not been the practice of our church to change historical documents. He requested that Assembly give the committee more time to consider this question. Despite a prolonged discussion which included many suggestions and several failed amendments, Assembly decided to leave the matter in the hands of the Committee on Church Doctrine.

Even the pope must wait while the mills of Presbyterian doctrine grind slowly on. It appears he will have to bear the title of Antichrist for one more year — at least, according to our subordinate standards.

Taxing transitions

The *Presbyterian Record's* decision to charge for items appearing in its Transitions column precipitated an overture to the past Assembly requesting that this practice cease. In responding to this overture, the *Record* Committee argued the magazine should not be seen as the official chronicler of the deaths of its servants or, primarily, as a resource for future scholars and researchers. The *Record* accepted the challenge of a previous General Assembly to become financially self-sufficient. Given the choice of raising subscription rates or charging for



What? No Donkey Kong? A bank of computers was set up for the convenience of commissioners.



The Young Adult Representatives showed good humour but little knowledge of inflation in their paraphrase of "If I Had a Million Dollars."

Transitions, the magazine chose what it considered to be the lesser of two evils.

The Assembly agreed, without dissent, to allow the *Record* to continue to consider the Transition column as paid advertising.

If YARs had a million dollars

A highlight of most Assemblies is the report of the Young Adult Representatives on the final evening of the Assembly. This year lived up to expectations.

The centrepiece of their presentation was some original words written to the popular tune "If I Had a Million Dollars" by the Barenaked Ladies. Among the things serious and ridiculous promised if YARs had a million dollars:

I'd donate it to PWS&D

I would buy you a church

Maybe some nice cushioned pews ...

I would pay off all your debts

I'd buy John Calvin's remains
Ooooh, all them crazy theological bones

Would world hunger be no more?
No, it wouldn't, but we'd feed more!

YARs could vote!

In closing

Throughout the Assembly, the Moderator effectively wove in the theme of Jubilee through Scripture and prayer with which he opened most sessions. He helped the commissioners look at the biblical meaning of Jubilee in which God, rather than economic systems or political perspectives, remains central. During business, the Moderator's generosity toward commissioners was not always reciprocated. His requests for guidance from the court were always met with several authoritative but differing views. When

he did make a decision, his ruling was frequently challenged — although never defeated!

This was Stephen Kendall's first Assembly as principal clerk. You would not have guessed it by the way he went about directing the business of the court. He not only knows and respects the law of the church but he is able to interpret it clearly and in a way commissioners can understand and appreciate.

The local arrangements committee under Skeeter Budd always had a drink or shuttle bus ready when needed.

The *Celebrate!* Committee gave commissioners a genuine reason and opportunity to celebrate.

I found the staff of the university consistently courteous and helpful. If the Assembly were to choose a permanent home, the University of Waterloo would be an excellent choice.

And, finally, a good word for modern technology. For the most part, it proved to be a worthy servant of the church. Through the use of computers, all motions, amendments and amendments to amendments quickly appeared on the huge overhead screen.

The Assembly adjourned shortly before noon on Friday with the traditional singing of "I Joyed When to the House of God" and prayer by the Moderator. He will reconstitute the General Assembly next year in Central Presbyterian Church, Hamilton, Ontario, at 7:30 p.m. on Sunday, June 4, when commissioners will have the opportunity to celebrate 2000 years of Jesus Christ and 125 years of The Presbyterian Church in Canada. **R**



"May we refer our report to the 126th General Assembly?"

— Ryan Duford
(Kamloops), beginning
the Young Adult
Representatives report

"The YAR program allows us to be empowered. It's great to be listened to."

— Jane Kennedy
(Niagara)

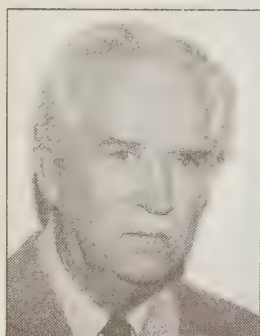
"Just a tap on the shoulder to say, 'We like what you're doing' is all it takes."

— Jason Malo
(Vancouver Island)

"It means a lot when someone says, 'Hey, what do you think about it?'"

— Margo McCaig
(Temiskaming)

Faces of Faith



Lászlo S. Pándy-Szekeres was born in Hungary in 1919. Educated at the Reformed College of Debrecen and the University of Kolozsvár, he obtained two doctorates. While at university, he co-chaired the Hungarian National University Student Federation and worked with Reformed Hungarian-speaking Christians around

Kolozsvár, Romania. From 1942 to 1947, he practised law in Kolozsvár, Budapest and Debrecen, served two years in the army and was a prisoner of war in Russia. As director of the Peasant Association of Eastern Hungary, he organized and managed co-operatives. He spent seven months in solitary confinement as a political prisoner during 1947. From 1948 to 1950, he was a social worker among Hungarian refugees living in the German-speaking area of Switzerland and was lay preacher of the Hungarian Reformed congregation in Zurich.

Pándy immigrated to Canada in 1950. He worked on a Saskatchewan dairy farm and then as an attendant in a mental institution in Hamilton, Ontario. From 1953 to 1956, he studied at Knox College, Toronto, and was student minister of the Hungarian congregation in Brantford, Ontario. He was called and ordained by Calvin Church in Delhi, Ontario, where he ministered until his retirement in 1978. He also served in synodical and presbytery positions and on various General Assembly committees. Pándy was also active in his community as president of the Delhi Rotary Club, member of the Ontario Council on Multiculturalism, president of the Delhi Chamber of Commerce and president of the Multicultural Association of Norfolk.

Lászlo Pándy and his wife, Piroska Rakossy, a chemist and high school teacher, have three sons — one is a missionary in Ukraine and two are elders in The Presbyterian Church in Canada — and one daughter, a church school teacher in the United Church.

Before the First Day

Discouraged often by the barren view
From heaven, doubtful that a plan so weird
Could work, He read again the text, *How to
Make Something Out of Nothing*, persevered.

— John Nixon Jr.

What is your earliest memory of church life?

In elementary church school, I had to go to an unheated church every morning with my class

What is your favourite hymn?

The 90th Psalm (Geneva)

What musical piece has most inspired you?

Kodaly's *Dances from Galanta*

What is your favourite biblical book, and why?

The Gospel of John — it is simply radiant!

What book (other than the Bible) has most influenced you?

The collection of the complete poems of Endre Ady

Where do you find inspiration to sustain your faith?

The many wonders that have happened to me and in my life

If you could invite anyone (past or present) to a dinner party, whom would you invite?

Winston Churchill

What is your biggest regret?

Not taking time to learn English fluently

What is your greatest joy in life?

My incredibly supportive wife

What do you find most irritating about The Presbyterian Church in Canada?

The lack of leadership and leaders

What one change in the church would make it substantially better?

If the presbyteries could learn "to remember"

How can we save the human race?

By providing a healthy environment for it to be put back into

If you could live a second time, who would you like to be?

Myself

Write your own epitaph

He was here to serve

The Ark Isn't Lost — It's in Dawson Creek, British Columbia

by John Congram

In 1984, John Van Spronsen, an elder in St. James Church in Dawson Creek, British Columbia, had open-heart surgery. During his rehabilitation, he found lots of time to think and pray. He wondered why kids who have more things than any previous generation are still unhappy. He came across alarming statistics: every 60 minutes in Canada, 1,030 kids get drunk, 114 run away from home, 44 girls abort an unwanted child, 28 girls (ages 12-14) become mothers, 1,370 teens take some form of narcotics, 731 kids are sexually or physically abused by a family member and 58 teens attempt suicide.

He concluded many reasons exist for this state of affairs, but one of the most important is that most teens do not have a relationship with Jesus Christ. Many are looking for someone who really cares and who is willing to listen to them. Dawson Creek has more than the aver-

age number of single parent families — parents who do not have the time their kids need.

Van Spronsen decided God was calling him to try to do something with young people, and give something back to the community in which he had raised his own family. He turned his roofing and lumber business over to his sons as the first step in bringing his vision to reality.

In 1988, Van Spronsen approached a handful of young adults, who had grown up in the Dawson Creek area, with his vision of a Christian youth centre. They began to study and pray together, convinced of the need for a centre that would serve both as a “refuge in the storm” for kids and as a place where kids

**For 10 years,
teenagers in
Dawson Creek
have found
refuge in the Ark
— a place where
faith and fun
become one**

could come under a Christian influence.

Soon after, Van Spronsen purchased a 10,000-square-foot metal warehouse that had been used as a honey plant. Harold Wiest, minister of St. James, recalls the first time Van Spronsen showed him the building and told him of his dreams for it. He remembers it as a plain metal building with very sticky floors. It required

\$150,000 worth of renovations to make it usable as a youth centre. The building was insulated, and washrooms, concession booth, offices and a lobby added. A double gymnasium for volleyball, basketball, ball hockey, badminton and concerts was constructed. The Ark officially opened on October 7, 1989.

Alvin Jorgensen has been a volunteer



Twenty-two years old and a single mother all on her own, she used to drop in at the Hall with her baby several times a week. Then, she disappeared for two weeks. Last week, she came back alone. She had decided to put her baby up for adoption so that he would have a more stable life than she could provide. We recognize this is a great act of love on her part. We'll be here to help as much as we can in this difficult time for her.

If you would like to hear more about our people and programs, please complete the form below and mail to:

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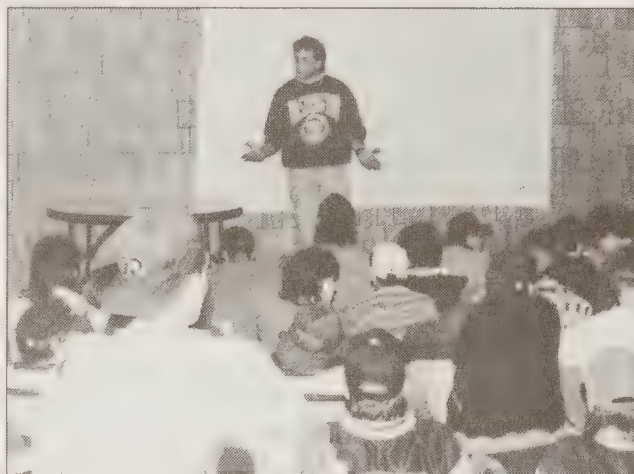
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City: _____

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at the Ark for about six years. He quotes the saying, "Proclaim the gospel; if necessary, use words" to explain what the Ark is about. At the Ark, he says, "We proclaim the gospel with our lives, but we also use words in club talks, at awards ceremonies and in one-on-one talks with the kids. They really listen because we've earned the right to be heard by being their friends and being there for them."

The Ark is unapologetically Christian. Part of its mission statement reads: "The Ark is a mission community of Christ-centred people committed to reaching adolescent youth with the gospel of Jesus Christ." However, volun-



Time-out for a club talk at the Ark.

teers do not carry Bibles, preach or make non-Christians feel uncomfortable or unwelcome. When evangelism takes place, it happens through relationships. In fact, Van Spronsen says, the Ark isn't about religion at all but about helping kids grow up in a difficult and complex society. Yes, volunteers pray to God to help them love these kids before they start a shift, a necessity for most after a workday at the office or factory.

Because of its proven track record in helping kids for more than a decade, local community organizations such as the Rotary Club and Kiwanis, as well as local businesses, help to support the Ark financially. In 1990, Van Spronsen was recognized for his contributions to the community by being named Citizen of the Year.

Derek Clark is a typical teenager who uses the facilities at the Ark to play ball hockey, basketball and volleyball. He also participates in Bible study and joined a recent all-night event to support the work of World Vision. He speaks warm-

ly about what the Ark has meant to him. "It is a place to hang out and not feel pressure. From the beginning, I felt welcome here. There was always someone to listen to me and lots of things to do."

Derek, as an older and more experienced participant, is beginning to assume some leadership roles at the centre. He coaches ball hockey for the nine- to 11-year-olds and acts as a drop-in supervisor on Friday nights. "I realize," he says, "that younger kids are watching what I say and do, so I need to be a good Christian role model for them. When I started to come to the Ark six years ago, I looked up to the leaders. Now, I am becoming one of them."

The Ark has one full-time and two part-time staff members. One of the latter also works part-time at St. James Church. Fifty-two volunteers donate about 250 hours each week. On average, 300 to 350 kids pass through the centre in an average week. Volunteers must be willing to "live the gospel" and build healthy relationships with the kids. With

volunteers from a variety of congregations working together, the cause of Christian unity has been fostered and the church in Dawson Creek strengthened.

In the past few years, requests from other communities across Canada wanting to start an Ark in their area have begun to flow in. Van Spronsen believes the idea is highly portable and will gladly give what help he can. (You can contact him at 250-786-5096 or fax 250-786-5188.) He believes the place to begin is where he started — gathering a small group of people who share the vision to meet together once a week for prayer. Meanwhile, if you travel through Dawson Creek, you are welcome to drop in at the Ark, especially if you are accompanied by a teen.

Good doesn't always come out of bad. But, in John Van Spronsen's case, a heart attack resulted in a heart for kids. "God gave me a second chance," Spronsen explains. "It was then I decided to spend the rest of my life trying to give something back." ■

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Knox Presbyterian Church Summer Fellowship 1999

Theme: "The Church in
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July 7: **Donald Carson**

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield
*A Peculiar People: The Identity of the Church
in a Neo-Pagan World* (1 Peter 2:4-12)

July 14 **Dennis Ngien**

Tyndale College and Seminary, Toronto
*Building Gospel Bridges: Speaking About Jesus
in a Post-Christian Culture* (Acts 17:16-34)

July 21: **Robert Norris**

Fourth Presbyterian Church, Washington
*Salt and Light: When God's People Make a Difference
in Their World* (Matthew 5:13-16)

July 28: **Mariano Di Gangi**

Knox Presbyterian Church, Toronto
Worship in Time and Space (John 4:19-26)

August 4: **Joel Nederhood**

Faith 20, Chicago
Shaking Things Up: When God's People Pray
(Acts 4:23-31)

August 11: **Glenn Smith**

Christian Direction, Montreal
For God So Loved the City: On Being An Urban Christian
(Philemon)

August 18: **Charles Nienkirchen**

Rocky Mountain College, Calgary
A Call to Pilgrimage: The Church as a Journeying People
(Psalm 84)

August 25: **Nigel Cameron**

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield
Should the Lord Tarry: The People of God in the Last Days
(2 Peter 3:1-18)

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Bible Teaching: 8-9 p.m.



Guideposts

Celebrating Our Heritage

First General Assembly, 1875 What They Said

After the union of the Presbyterian churches in 1875, the Assembly proceeded to a "social entertainment" evening at the Victoria skating rink in Montreal. Brief quotes from some of the speakers follow.

J. W. Dawson, LL.D., Principal of McGill College, took the chair at eight o'clock ... Dr. Dawson then said it fell to him to say specially to the ministers, elders and other friends who constituted this great historic gathering, on behalf of the Presbyterians of Montreal, the one word — Welcome. (Applause) ...

Principal Snodgrass, D.D., of Queen's College, was called upon. He said ... he was not Canadian by birth, but he had lived long enough in this country to understand what it was to be a Canadian, and he could see that we needed a Church purely Canadian around which this and future generations of Canadians could rally. (Applause) ...

Rev. Mr. McGregor, of Nova Scotia, said he had no words adequately to express the joyful satisfaction, brotherly love, and the gratitude to God which had thrilled our hearts, morning, noon and night. We saw realized to-day the cherished desires of years gone by, not only of many here to-day, but of the good men, faithful ministers and elders, who had finished their course here below. Those men saw this day as very far off, while we had been permitted to see it arrive and take part in this celebration. It had been called a marriage day, and this evening was the wedding. (Hear, hear.) ...

Rev. George M. Grant, of Halifax, was received with cheers. He said: The occasion is too great for my words, but no occasion is too great for the words of our Lord. Here, then, are the words of our Lord and Master: "Little children, believe in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and love one another as He gave us commandment." May God help us to keep this commandment. "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." These are our marching orders; God help us to keep them.

Mr. Grant here took his seat amid loud and continued applause, which was again and again renewed with the evident intention of calling him up again. Finally Mr. Grant rose again, and said that as he saw there were four speakers to follow him, he threw away his speech and gave the audience something better....



Photo courtesy of Presbyterian Church Archives

Judge Stephens hoped that the fact of the meeting being held in a skating rink would not be regarded as an ominous sign. Many had indeed lost their upright position there, but there was no chance for congealing frosts under a June sun. (Laughter.) ... The progress of the Union had reminded him of a fable in which it is related that a man on a mountain looking out in the distance saw something which he thought to be a wild animal; on approaching nearer he discovered that it was a man, and, on coming still nearer, that it was his own brother....

Rev. Dr. Ormiston, of New York, was received with applause.... The influences of the Union would be felt in the United States and in the old country. In Scotland they had talked for ten years, and had done nothing; in Canada they had talked for five years, and the thing was done. He advised the sending of Dr. Cook, the first Moderator, to Scotland as a missionary to preach the grand and glorious gospel of Unity.

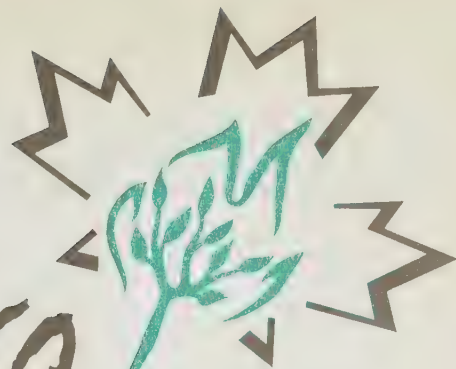
The meeting then closed by singing "God Save the Queen," which was done in a hearty manner.

— *The Presbyterian*, July 1875

The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Millennium / 125th / Jubilee

Celebrate!



The Celebration Begins!

"I am astounded how little my students know of Jesus and how he has shaped all aspects of our culture," said Dr. David Goa of the Provincial Museum of Alberta at the 125th General Assembly meeting in Kitchener, Ontario, in June. He hopes to change that a little with his millennium exhibit *2000 Years of Jesus Christ*. Using art that depicts Jesus through the ages, Goa provided a fascinating glimpse into what we can expect from this project. He hopes this exhibit will help give people the opportunity to reconsider Jesus.



Top: Moderator Arthur Van Seters addresses commissioners after lighting the candles on the 125th anniversary cake.

Right: The Kitchener-Waterloo Korean Presbyterian Choir.

Goa made one of several presentations as the *Celebrate!* Committee launched the Millennium/125th/Jubilee celebrations with commissioners and visitors from neighbouring congregations. Barry Mack, a member of the *Celebrate!* Committee, gave a visual presentation of the contributions of Canadian Presbyterians over the past 125 years using photos from the archives and clips from the Heritage Projects moments frequently seen on television.

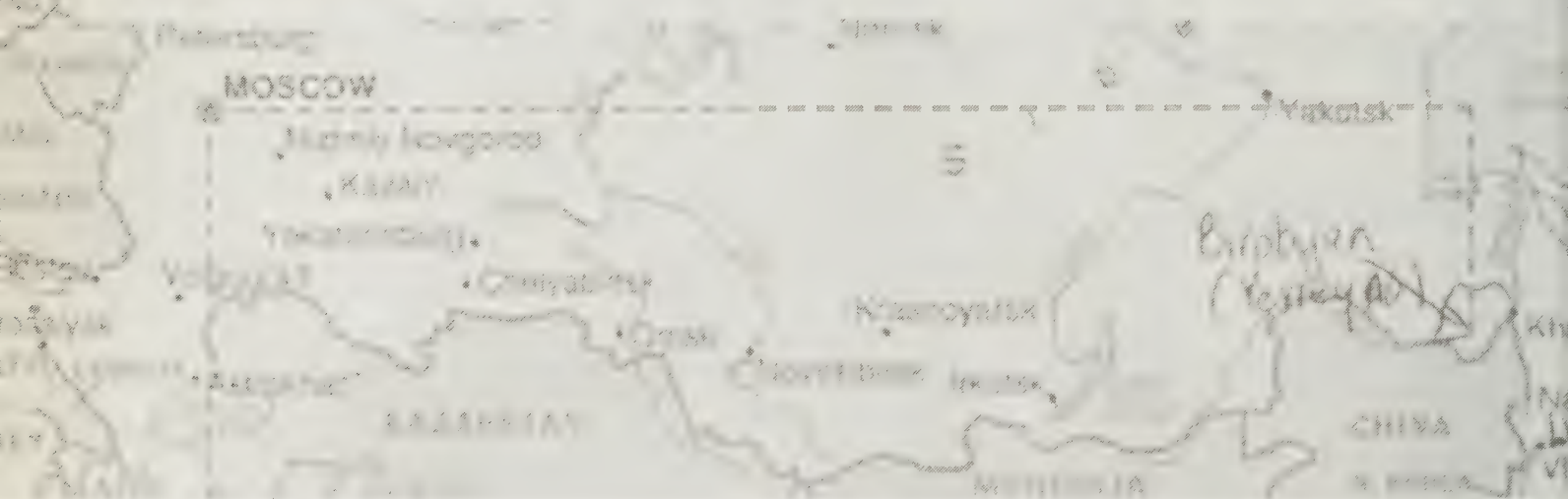
The Kitchener-Waterloo Korean Presbyterian Choir and the Presbyterian African Heritage Gospel Choir provided the music. The celebration really got underway at the end of the formal proceedings when the gospel choir took over and led the Assembly and guests in gospel singing, and dancing. Soon, members of the Korean choir joined them and the gathering began to resemble John's vision of the church in the book of Revelation where people of every race join in harmony and joyful praise around God's throne. If, as we had been told earlier that day, we believe what we sing, then our future looks dazzling.

A few minutes later, the Moderator lit the candles on a huge 125th anniversary cake that had been formed by blue and white cupcakes. Tuesday evening concluded with commissioners dancing and embracing, many with blue and white icing still smeared across their faces. **R**



International Adoption: Not Easy but Rewarding

by Ivor Williams



A London, Ontario, couple travels the tortuous path to adopt a young Russian boy

When the congregation of Westmount Presbyterian Church in London, Ontario, vowed to “guide and nurture” Kevin Vasya Patrick Boyle during his baptismal service, it was the continuation of a support offered even before the Russian-born baby came to live among them. Little Kevin is one of thousands of children born each year in the various regions of what once was the USSR whose parents either give them up for adoption, desert them or leave them as wards of the state.

The Boyles discovered there are 600,000 children in Russian orphanages and hospitals. Not all are available for adoption, however, because some parents keep control of the child. They hope their own situation might enable them to bring their child into their home some day.

Once scheduled for an uncertain life, Kevin flew instead to London with his new parents, Janis and Patrick Boyle, where sister Stephanie and the West-

mount congregation waited. They offered “incredible support,” Janis says.

Janis and Patrick, determined to have a boy under two years of age, found they faced a waiting period of several years for an Ontario adoption. Considering their own ages, and that of their daughter, they felt such a wait was not feasible. They searched all sources, particularly the Internet, and zeroed in on European adoptions. It was a long and sometimes frustrating process with the rules frequently changing but, as Janis says with a smile, “If you are on your toes, it can be done.”

After about four months of negotiations, completion of many official documents, confirmation of the London home environment by a licensed social worker and an in-depth analysis of the Boyles’s suitability to be the parents, the Ontario Community and Social Services ministry officially approved the couple for an international adoption. The next step was to

fication of the Boyles's documentation was exchanged, fees paid and medical history verified. An advocate spoke on behalf of the Canadian couple. Finally,

approval was given for the adoption, and Kevin's Russian passport was issued. (It is the official Russian position that their children stay in the homeland even though they are likely to grow to maturity in an institution.) "But those kids need homes," say the Boyles.

At the conclusion of the court hearing, Kevin and his new parents headed off for the seven-hour flight to Moscow and the Canadian embassy where he was quickly issued a visa for his entry to Canada. "The embassy staff was very helpful," the Boyles say.

Would both of you go through it all again? Janis was asked. "Absolutely," she replied quickly. In her mind, she could see "all those kids over there, 13 in one room. We are really blessed we were able to do it."

"Kevin is a great little traveller and fits in here like glue," laughs Janis. "He is used to noise (from his early life in the hospital), he's a healthy and happy baby, and he fits in so well. And Stephanie is already a real little mommy."

The process was complete. But all this came at a price. How much? "It would be about the price of a new mini-

van — and in American money," the Boyles revealed.

Janis believes it is important for many Canadians to know of the possibility of international adoptions. While the wait is frustrating and the procedures costly, "the process is satisfactory." She will speak of her experience at information sessions for other prospective adoptive parents. "It is for those not willing to wait and who are able to afford it. An advantage is they can choose the sex of their child."

The Westmount congregation, where Janis is active as a church school teacher, member of the Christian education committee and a leader in the "Faith, Fun and Fellowship" project, has been a "big supporter" of the Boyles. Its minister, Bob

Robinson, and his wife, Donna, were official sponsors for the adoption request.

The crowded little hospital in the region of Birobidjan was the beneficiary of gifts carried there by the Boyles. They took a sizeable donation from the congregation to assist the hospital in purchasing supplies, a big bundle of blankets and knitted sweaters from women of Westmount.

With that help and through "word and deed with love and in prayer," Kevin was received into the congregation after a long, long journey. **R**

Ivor Williams is a retired daily journalist, a member of Westmount Church in London, Ont., and a contributing editor of this magazine.

apply to Adoption Horizons, a non-profit agency based in New York, that would start negotiations with the Russian Ministry of Education in Moscow which deals with adoption requests. There were simultaneous applications to the federal government in Ottawa to allow the entry of a child the Boyles would agree to sponsor. And the Royal Canadian Mounted Police even took their fingerprints.

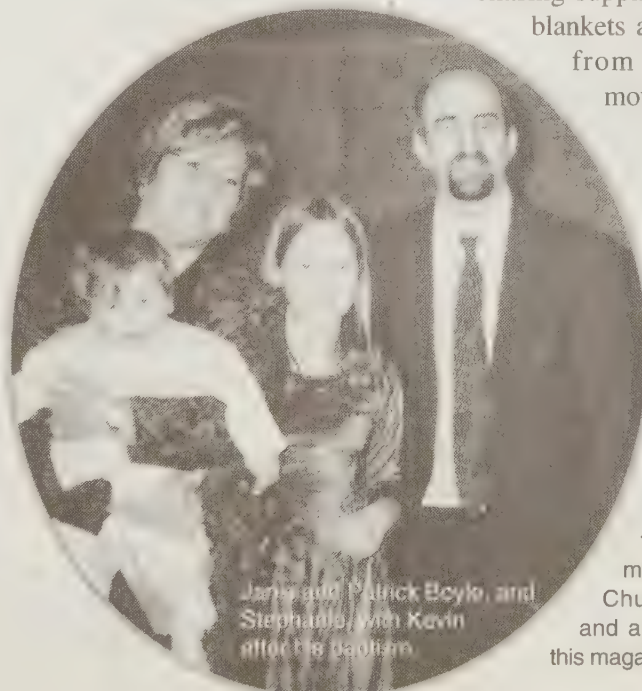
In August, Janis and Patrick received videos of boys available for adoption. They chose little Kevin because, "with his dimple, many people say he looks just like one of us." Kevin was born in a hospital in the region of Birobidjan, a seven-hour flight east of Moscow. He would have been moved at the age of

four months to an orphanage where he might have lived for years had the adoption process not been under way.

The next step was for the Boyles to plan their flight to Birobidjan and make arrangements for a home-stay. While there, they would deal with the almost-final adoption process.

Then, they met their new son for the first time. During a 10-day waiting period, which they spent with their "marvellous" home-stay family, they visited with Kevin in his hospital area twice a day. The authorities required these visits to verify that "we still wanted him." A doctor gave assurance about Kevin's health but suggested he might be developmentally delayed because his four months in the institution meant he lacked the physical bonding available to a child living with parents and family. "We felt comfortable with that," Janis said.

A final court hearing was required, complete with translators, at which veri-



Janis and Patrick Boyle, and Stephanie, with Kevin sitting on the floor.



Tales of Mischief

by Phil Callaway

"I sometimes worry about the kids," admits my wife. "Because ... well, Honey, they're a lot like you"

Tonight, after scolding the boys for feeding birthday candles to a neighbour's dog, I chase them to bed snackless, then sit in the living room wondering if there's any hope at all for my descendants. "Do you ever wonder," I ask my wife, "what will happen to a generation that doesn't even know which way to wear their hats? A generation raised on Nintendo and the Spice Girls? I mean, seriously, sometimes I wonder what the world will be like when all the prayer warriors are gone. When all the great preachers and writers and missionaries have passed off the scene."

"I sometimes worry about the kids," admits my wife. "Because ... well, Honey, they're a lot like you."

Thankfully, the phone interrupts our conversation.

The caller is a friend I haven't seen in years. Would I care to join him and a few others for a friendly game of floor hockey? Now, please understand, at my age (38), when one is simply grateful for the strength to rise unaided from the sofa and waddle to the kitchen

for six square meals a day, one should not entertain thoughts of dashing up and down the gym floor trying to prove himself a teenager. But there's no way I'm admitting it. Quicker than you can say cardiac arrest, I say yes.

By the end of round one, my face is roughly the colour of a ripe plum.

"I think I pulled some fat," I tell my teammates. By the end of round two, I have contracted a respiratory problem and, unable to find an oxygen tent, I suggest we retire to my house for a healthy snack; namely, Pepsi and chips. The suggestion is welcomed by Dave Wall and Pete Rashleigh, two childhood buddies. Soon we're sitting around the table swapping tales of mischief and laughing until my respiratory problems return.

The three of us grew up in a conservative community where we worked hard to make a name for ourselves. Unfortunately, the names some grown-ups called us are not safe to print. Here is a short list of our exploits to help you understand why (please do not let your children see these):

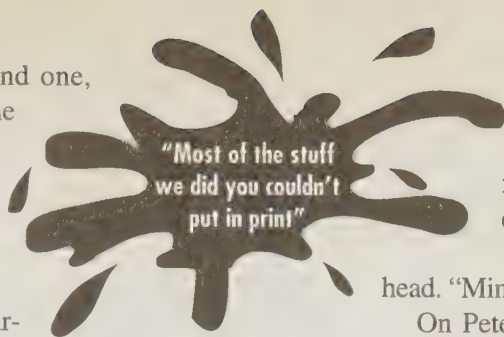
1. Using dark felt pens to add a single consonant to garage sale signs so they read "Garbage Sale."
2. Sneaking into the church nursery and placing Limburger cheese in diapers.
3. Calling the morgue to inform them that Mr. Amstutz, our 10th grade math teacher, was dead.

We also tell tales of Super-Gluing salt shakers to restaurant tables, of signing classmates up for the military, and the strategic placement of outhouses, whoopee cushions, shaving cream and Saran Wrap. An hour later, the Pepsi is gone, but the stories keep coming.

"Most of the stuff we did you couldn't put in print," admits Dave. "My teachers hated me. Every time I turned around, they spanked me. You check the dictionary for 'brat' and you'll find my high school picture."

Pete's list of accomplishments rivalled Dave's. "I was chased by security guards, banned from talent shows and kicked out of Bible college — and that was during one of my better weeks," he says. "I used to steal tapes from Christian record stores."

The clock slips past midnight before we grow quiet and a little more serious. Pete shakes his head. "On countless nights, my parents laid awake wondering



when the police would call. And praying for the day I'd come home."

Dave nods his head. "Mine, too."

On Pete's 20th birthday, God got his attention. "I was going 80 miles an hour on a motorcycle when we crashed," he says. "I was lying in the ditch, unconscious, and I had this dream where everything was pitch black. When I woke up, this guy was standing over me, his lips moving rapidly. He was praying. That was the day I gave up running. And came home for good."

Today, Pete is senior pastor of a Baptist church. He recently named his first-born daughter Karis — Greek for grace. And Dave? Well, he's quit taunting his teachers and joined them. When he isn't playing practical jokes on the natives, he teaches the Bible to a remote tribe in Papua, New Guinea.

Pete and Dave know a few things for sure. They know God has a great sense of humour, that he loves nothing more than watching wandering boys come home, and they'd tell you any time that their lives have never been more exciting than they are right now.

The clock is moving toward one as I bid them goodnight. The children are asleep; so I slip silently into their rooms, place a soft hand on their heads, and pray: "Dear God, thank you that there is hope after all. That you delight in changing people. Will you do as much for my kids? Will you take their energy and shape it for good? May they find in me something worth imitating. And may they find in you everything they'll ever need to make a mark on this old world."

On the way to bed, I switch off the kitchen light and pull aside a curtain. Sure enough, Pete and Dave are still parked in the driveway, the hood up.

I guess they haven't found the potato I put in their exhaust pipe. **R**

Phil Callaway is a popular speaker and the author of four best-sellers including *Making Life Rich Without Any Money* (Harvest House). His fifth book, *Who Put the Skunk in the Trunk? (Learning to laugh when life stinks)*, is due out this summer.

Briefly noted

Parting ways: The United Church congregation of the joint **United- Presbyterian charge of St. Ann's, Englishtown, N.S.**, has decided to go its own way after approximately six years of union with the Presbyterian congregation.

On furlough: **Clarence and Cathy McMullen** from India, June 20, for one year.

On vacation: **Clara Henderson** from Malawi, June 30; **Makram and Mona Barsoum**, from Cyprus, July 1; **Michael and Wendy Lessard-Clouston and family**, from Japan, July 1.

Returned to Canada: **Lillian Sparling**, from Taiwan, June 25; **Dr. Margaret Black and Dr. Hilikka Davidson**, from Kenya, July 3.

To thee we pass the mouse

Presbyterian Record columnist Kathy Cawsey has decided to leave the Generation Y page. At the "positively ancient" age of 25, she believes someone younger



is needed for the job. Her last Generation Y column will be in the December issue. Kathy will, however, continue to provide thought-provoking articles for the *Record*.

Bearing in mind the importance of young people to the church, and their need to be heard, we would like to continue the Generation Y column in some fashion. Proposals for this page are welcome. Please send them to: *Presbyterian Record*, 50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, Ontario M3C 1J7. Fax: (416) 441-2825. E-mail: jcongram@presbyterian.ca.

Please Note

In the "With Thanks to God" acknowledgment in the May *Presbyterian Record* (page 18), the surname of Myrtle May Barbaree of Guelph, Ontario, was misspelled. Financial Services apologizes for the error.



To Praise and Bury Cawsey

For the summer issue of the *Record*, I like to open the column up to those who have written to me over the year. Many thanks to those who wrote, either in *Letters to the editor* or to me personally.

"I think you need to believe in Satan. By trying to block out the reality of his existence, you're allowing him to have power in your life.... You may think you aren't going to get hit because you don't believe in his power; but, in boxing, if you don't believe in the other fighter's ability to send you sprawling, you're more of a coward than if you simply tried not to get hit. At least, then, you respect his power."

— David Corbett

"Despite your critics in the June and July/August *Records*, life without God is hell. In my opinion (which is given to erring), hell is here on earth.... [God] is still creating us. We are not yet complete.... As we learn, we grow closer to God, or God's ideal."

— John Lowndes

"I have been a part of the Presbyterian team for nearly 70 years. Yet, when I reached age 50, I found myself completely exhausted and drained.... My wife and I became involved with dear friends in a Roman Catholic renewal group. Through this wonderful body of Christians ... we became members of a new 'team' whose head is Christ.... If we have a team 'colour,' how about the dazzling and glorious light of Christ?"

— Edward Mason

"If you are unable or unwilling to commit to ensuring that your writings are

theologically sound and denominationally appropriate, you should resign your position.... It is unbiblical and unfaithful to suggest that 'people create miracles out of broken lives,' or that God will 'grant [you] the grace to make miracles.' God himself creates miracles. This is elementary theology that my three children could express."

— Janet Storm

Readers respond to Generation Y columns

"You speak of an 'abstract, distant God.' That is not the God I know who has been close to me throughout my more than 75 years, guiding and directing me in my major decisions (even those I definitely did

not want to follow), answering my numerous prayers.... I had to learn the mathematics of 'Probability,' so when a whole series of improbable events occurred to direct me in a certain direction, I know to rule out 'coincidence.'"

— Eileen Paul

"I am moved to give you my perspective of the 'happenings' at St. Andrews, Lachine, Quebec.... We are mainly a congregation of seniors ... I don't have time to wait for the light to dawn on those who are suffering from acute homophobia.... The Presbyterian Church in Canada not only marries divorced people but has teaching elders who have divorced and remarried and still occupy pulpits ... Jesus Christ declares, with great passion, remarriage is adultery and the adulterer takes the new partner into adultery also. God's laws, given to Moses on the mountain, include the stern admonition not to commit adultery for it is a grave sin. Yet, the PCC con-

done this grave sin but reacts negatively to a committed homosexual relationship."

— Margaret Johnston

"I don't have a mother any more waiting for me to come home, nor have I been able to make those trips as I used to do. Not because I don't want to.... 'My home' is not mine any longer but better described as one of confinement instead. But, then, these 'homes' are really only temporal; we have one described as 'not made by hands,' 'eternal' in the heavens!"

— Lou Nickerson

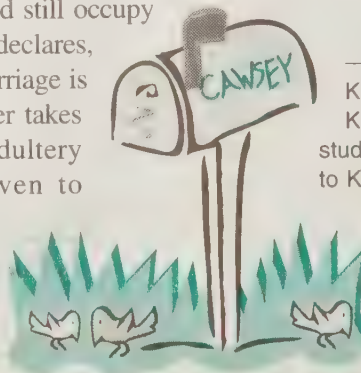
"My dad tells me I should go to church, but I think it is OK to stay home and worship there. He says when we go to church we get to be surrounded with other people who love God as well. But I feel as if they think I am too young and don't know how to love God or how to act during church. I feel bored in church and don't fully understand the sermon."

— Caris (age 13)

"I am serving in a two-point charge in rural Alberta. I am glad there are young people ... who think seriously about faith and worship. Many of the young people here (teens) throw their energies into hockey or dating. There are a good number of young people coming out to a youth group in one of my congregations, but the average age is only about 11."

— Ariane Jones **R**

Kathy Cawsey, a member of Knox Church, Waterloo, Ont., is studying at Oxford University. Write to Kathy at: Middle Common Room Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, England OX2 6QA; by e-mail at kathleen.cawsey@lmh.ox.ac.uk.



PCC News

The Record's fine-feathered friends

The congregation of St. Andrew's Church, Geraldton, Ontario, has not only put itself on the *Presbyterian Record's* Every Home Plan, it has provided homes for many birds as well. Recently, St. Andrew's held a silent auction of bird-houses and feeders, from the "purely practical to the absolutely outrageous," with the proceeds going to the Every Home Plan. The auction was deemed a "tremendous success," and both the congregation and birds are happy the idea took flight.



Betty Isaacs (left) and Patti Clouthier set up the display of bird-houses for sale.

Faithful servants

Synod worker recognized for volunteerism

Margaret Wilson, educational consultant for the Synod of Saskatchewan, was presented with the Sterling Award for volunteer work by a woman. The award, sponsored by CFQC-TV, Saskatoon, and the Saskatoon Jewish Community, recognized Margaret for her work with the Sherbrooke Community Centre, a long-term care facility where she has served as a volunteer for 20 hours a month for the past 20 years.



Dr. Denton, we presume

Peter Denton, a contributing editor to the *Presbyterian Record*, has received a 1999 Science and Religion Course Prize for "Encounters in Science and Religion," a history course he will teach as a sessional lecturer at Concord College, Winnipeg, this fall.

Funded by the John Templeton Foundation and awarded through the Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences in Berkeley, California, the \$10,000 prize is split between the institution and the instructor who designs and teaches the course. Now in its fifth year, the program gives up to 100

prizes annually for "outstanding proposals in Science and Religion" taught in universities around the world. There were 98 prizes awarded in 1999, seven of which went to Canadians.

Minister named "Citizen of the Year"

Rev. Peter Bush, minister of Knox Church, Mitchell, Ontario, has been named 1998 Citizen of the Year by the Mitchell Jaycees.

Although he has lived in Mitchell for less than four years, Peter was cited for his involvement in the community. Among other things, he is chair of the Community Care Coordinating Committee, the umbrella group that oversees the local Christmas Food Hamper and toy drive, as well as the food bank and other ventures. He is a member of the library board and the board of a local seniors residence. Recently, he joined the pastoral care committee of Stratford General Hospital, becoming part of a rotation of chaplains that help with the workload of the two regular chaplains. His pastoral care is also seen in his regular visits to students at the local high school. His apparently seamless fit into the community includes his membership in the Mitchell and District Agricultural Society and his entries in the vegetable growing events at the Mitchell Fair.

Peter Bush is a contributing editor to the *Presbyterian Record*.

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NEWS

Asian churches seek to support native ministry

The Presbyterian Church in Canada reaffirmed its commitment to native ministry recently when it hosted a National Native Ministries Consultation. The consultation attracted more than 40 people, including representatives from the Korean Christian Church in Japan, the Presbyterian Church of Korea, the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan, Canadian native leaders and a host of Presbyterian Church national and presbytery representatives.

Canada Ministries associate secretary Gordon Haynes said that an important aspect of the consultation was the celebration of culture. Prior to the consultation, the Japanese and Taiwanese delegation, along with Canadian Presbyterians, engaged in a five-day tour of native ministries, visiting a prison, a reserve and the Saskatoon Native Circle Ministry. The Asian visitors were treated to traditional drumming, clothing and food.

Haynes said the overseas church representatives came to the meeting to determine what role they could play in Canadian native ministry. Some came offering to send ministry staff to help support the Presbyterian ministry; others offered financial support.

The April 28 - 30 consultation focused on a statement of understanding of how other denominations can become involved in native ministries. "We developed the principles of understanding," Haynes said, "as well as a skeletal outline of the orientation and training required for new staff." He admits the consultation could have

carried on for a few more days to hammer out a lot of the details. It will be his task to flesh out the statement of understanding and send it around to the participants for their approval.

The bottom line, he says, is that native ministries in Canada will expand. "We've been involved in this for over 100 years. The opportunity arose to involve other partners."

Despite a determination to develop and nurture native leadership, Haynes admits few have become ordained clergy. Leadership training, however, continues to take place.

And what is the role of The Presbyterian Church in Canada within the native community? Haynes says the needs vary from community to community. "Most communities long to have some sort of spiritual centre, a place to meet, a place that is safe." Consequently, most of the Presbyterian Church's native ministries have a social aspect to them. "Ministry is about relationship-building, developing and nurturing connections."

The consultation, the first of its kind in several years, was deemed successful. Haynes said it was good to bring together the various ministry partners to re-focus on goals and opportunities.

The church representatives from Japan, Korea and Taiwan will return to their respective denominations to develop their own plans and their levels of commitment to the Canadian native ministry. (Keith Knight)



East met West during a presentation by band members to Rev. Olam Sing (third from right) of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan during the National Native Ministries Consultation.

Thought for food: books sent to Nigeria

The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, The Presbyterian Church in Canada's oldest African church partner, has been facing severe tests of its resolve to be light and salt within the Nigerian context for many years. The church has witnessed great erosion of services provided to the population by increasingly despotic and brutal military regimes.

Perhaps the most painful experience since the civil war (1967 - 1970) was the take-over of all mission schools by the government. Rather than improving the quality of education, the entire system was allowed to fall into disrepair and ruin. Once proud institutions, producing graduates of the highest standards, were reduced to a pitiful condition.

In an attempt to build up the education sector in the country, The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria requested assistance in providing textbooks to

several schools in southeast Nigeria. International Ministries joined the Nigerian church and embarked on a project to supply books to the theological colleges, secondary and primary schools.

The project was a great success. Over 680 cartons of books were loaded on April 10 after being collected over a 12-month period. They had been stored in the basement of Trinity York Mills Church in Willowdale, Ontario. Youth from several surrounding churches, bolstered by the 2402 Cadets



Many hands made light work when volunteers helped load a six-metre container with books for Nigeria.

Corps of the Governor General's Horse Guards, Denison Armoury, loaded all cartons within three hours. The cartons filled a six-metre container that was shipped to Nigeria by sea on April 25. (Rick Fee)

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Other News

The Heart of Ukraine: a visit with Filimon Semeniuk

There is a vitality to Rev. Filimon Semeniuk that belies his 87 years and the often-difficult life he has led. A victim of both Soviet and Nazi persecution, he has endured threats to his life, separation from his family and more than eight years in a labour camp. It is a tribute to his faith that his eyes still sparkle. It is

making other plans. In 1939, there were 35 Evangelical Reformed congregations in Western Ukraine, with 5,000 members, 18 ministers and several students, among them Filimon Semeniuk. All that changed quickly when the Soviets overran the country. The church came under tremendous pressure. Ministers had to

he was released for good behaviour.

Little was different for the church under the Communist governments that followed. Life may have been marginally safer, but there was no tolerance for the church. Filimon "worked hard and kept a low profile." It was only with the government of Mikhail Gorbachev in the late 1980s that things began to change.

Finally, in 1991, with less than 10 members, the Evangelical Reformed congregation in Rivne was registered. It was officially constituted on Pentecost Day 1996. Like other congregations in Ukraine, it depends largely on spiritual and material support from churches in other countries, primarily the Netherlands, Scotland and the United States.

Filimon Semeniuk continues his pastoral ministry in Rivne, a city the size of Calgary, and in Stepan, a nearby village. He still preaches every Sunday. He has a state pension equivalent to \$6 a month, if he receives it. Until a few years ago, he worked part-time at a *kolhoz* (collective farm). He is a modest and unassuming man to be the elder statesman for his church. But that is what he has become, by perseverance and faith.

When asked if there was anyone who had played an instrumental role in their lives and all the obstacles, it is Sophia who replies. The tears come before the translator's answer: "Only God." (*Tom Dickey*)



Rev. Filimon and Sophia Semeniuk with Rev. Helen Smith and Rev. Bob Smith, minister of Thornhill Church, Thornhill, Ont.

only when he recalls the past that you see the pain beneath the sparkle.

Filimon Semeniuk and his wife, Sophia, shared some of that past with the congregation of Thornhill Church, Thornhill, Ontario, when they were special guests at a mission weekend held April 24-25. While in the Toronto area, they also visited church offices. Married for 60 years, the Semeniuks look like central casting's answer to "Find me a nice, little, old, Russian-looking couple." They also look like the kind of people who would share their last loaf of bread with a stranger.

Born in 1912 and raised in the Russian Orthodox tradition, Filimon joined the Evangelical Reformed Church because he found the Orthodox Church lacking in "real spiritual values." In 1934, he enrolled in a seminary in Poland. Inspired by the work of Presbyterian missionary Rev. Paul Crath, Semeniuk's goal was to be a missionary in Western Ukraine.

But life is what happens while you're

run or face arrest. Filimon did what he could to provide pastoral care in the Rivne area, while supporting himself as a bookkeeper in a forestry office.

Two years later, it was the Nazis' turn to invade. Filimon, who was then working as a translator, was forced to flee for his life. There were many moments when he stood in front of his grave, but through them all he experienced "the protecting hand of the Lord."

Then, like a recurring nightmare, the Soviets returned in 1944. What was left of the church disappeared. Filimon saw many believers taken away to labour camps in Siberia. In 1947, he was sentenced to 10 years in the Gulag. Sophia and their two daughters, ages nine months and three years, lived with her father while Sophia tried to find work. It was only during Filimon's final year in the camp that his family was allowed to live nearby, in the city of Omsk. He says he survived because he "was always with the Bible." After eight and a half years,

Turning plowshares into worship

Have you ever had to line up to get into a worship service? Such an experience could be yours if you attend the Interdenominational Church Service in the Zurich, Ontario, arena on September 19, in conjunction with the 1999 International Plowing Match and Farm Machinery Show hosted by Huron County. Nine denominations will come together under one roof to worship in harmony. Nine

(Continues)

young adults, backed by a mass choir of more than 300 voices from churches across the county, will lead the service.

Even better (for those of us born before 1972, at any rate), the guest speaker for the service will be Paul Henderson, a lay minister, motivational speaker, marriage enrichment workshop leader *and* hockey player. His goal against the Russian team on September 28, 1972, holds a cherished place in the memories of Canadians across the country.

Scottish election forces Assembly to change venue

The Church of Scotland's General Assembly in May took place in an unusual setting — the Edinburgh International Conference Centre. The Kirk's usual Assembly Hall was occupied by the establishment of the newly devolved Scottish Parliament. Despite the unfamiliar surroundings, the more than 1,000 commissioners to the Assembly managed to complete their business on time.

Among the special guests to Assembly was the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Rt. Hon. Gordon Brown. In his address, "Economics of Hope," the chancellor underlined the need to get rid of the burden of Third World debt. He also emphasized that the removal of debt must go hand-in-hand with ensuring any new funds or funds released from repayments are used for health, education and development, and not to purchase arms or to get "lost" through corruption.

"Debt relief is a moral issue," the chancellor told the Assembly. "Unsustainable debt is a burden imposed from the past on the present, which is depriving millions of their chance to the future."

Among other guests was the African Children's Chorus, who captivated the audience with their singing and presented the Moderator, the Rt. Rev. John Cairns, with a drum [perhaps as proof that Moderators march to a different beat]. (Stewart Nichol)

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Crieff Hills Community

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Place: Crieff Hills Community, Puslinch, ON

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Interested applicants should send their applications by September 30, 1999, to Sandy Higgs-Nesbitt, 2748 Baseline Rd., Ottawa, ON K2H 7B4.

NEWS

News Scan

But, wait until he runs the spell-check!

For 61-year-old Donald Jackson, calligrapher and official scribe to Queen Elizabeth II, the hand-written illuminated Bible, which he has begun, is "the rest of my life's work." Sponsored by St. John's Abbey and University in Collegeville, Minnesota, the book will be the first handwritten and illuminated Bible to be commissioned since the advent of printing 500 years ago. Jackson will use the best of modern and medieval technology — computers and goose quill pens on vellum — in creating what promises to be a glorious production. (ENI)

AIDS: Africa's top killer

AIDS is now the leading cause of death in Africa, overtaking malaria as the continent's main killer disease, the United Nations has said. The epidemic was responsible for one in five deaths in Africa last year. World-wide, the UN said, AIDS is now a bigger killer than any other infectious disease — and the fourth overall cause of death after heart disease, strokes and respiratory infections, which often affect people in old age. (ENI)

THE PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE, MONTREAL DIRECTOR OF PASTORAL STUDIES

The Presbyterian College invites applications and nominations for the position of Director of Pastoral Studies, to assume duties in August 2000. The appointment will be for a three-year, renewable term, and involves among other duties the co-ordination of field education and instruction in one or more subjects in practical theology. Preference will be given to an ordained minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada with pastoral experience and an earned doctorate in a discipline relevant to pastoral studies.

The College is a Presbyterian and Reformed theological seminary of The Presbyterian Church in Canada preparing candidates for ministry. It is a member of an ecumenical, theological consortium, together with the Faculty of Religious Studies of McGill University, Montreal Diocesan Theological College and United Theological College.

Applications and nominations should be accompanied by a C.V. and the names and addresses of three or more referees. Submissions should be sent no later than November 1, 1999, to: The Principal, The Presbyterian College, 3495 University Street, Montreal, Quebec H3A 2A8. Phone: (514) 288-5256; Fax: (514) 288-8072; E-mail: cxgf@musica.mcgill.ca; Web page: www.mcgill.ca/religion/presbcol.htm.

Minister Sought for The Presbyterian Church in Grenada

The Presbyterian Church in Grenada is seeking an experienced minister to provide leadership in the Kirk in St. George's and several outlying missions. Proposed length of contract is three years with the possibility of renewal. Attractive benefits include a furnished house and car. A minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada serving in Canada could have Associate Missionary status with the Life and Mission Agency.

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50 Wynford Drive
Toronto, ON M3C 1J7
Tel. 1-800-619-7301
E-mail: mross@presbyterian.ca



Guiding the Courts Minute by Minute

What are the duties of clerks of presbytery or of the Assembly? Do they simply take down the minutes or do they also guide the court?

"Clerk" is, of course, a fancy word for "secretary." The clerk takes down the minutes of the proceedings of the court, prints and distributes them, and has them attested as correct at a subsequent meeting. As I consult the Book of Forms, I note it speaks sparingly about the duties of the clerks of any court of the church. He or she is the custodian of the records of the court and responsible for their safekeeping. Upon the authority of the church court, the clerk gives extracts of minutes and signs letters and official documents on its behalf (section 18, Book of Forms).

It should go without saying that any clerk of any of the courts of the church should be well-versed in parliamentary procedure and in the Book of Forms. Clerks should have a sense of the theology of our polity and be able to respond to questions from the floor of the court or to assist the moderator in making his or her rulings in accordance with established parliamentary procedure and the law of the church. Thus, they provide guidance to the moderator and to the court.

Whenever clerks are members of the court they serve, they need wisdom and discernment when contentious issues arise on which they hold strong views themselves. One of the prized assets of any clerk is a reputation for fairness and objectivity, and the sense that those espousing opposing views will receive equal attention and fair counsel. For this reason, for example, I believe clerks of presbytery should never be part of visitation committees to congregations where

conflicts exist, except to serve in a consultative capacity. They should avoid such dual relationships and always be available for advice and counsel to all parties in any conflict situation.

I also believe it is important for clerks to alert the court they serve to any proposed action that might contravene the law of the church. The court may ignore such advice; but the clerk, if not a member of the court, should have the privilege of having his or her statement of concern recorded in the minutes. Such statements of concern were, in fact, recorded in the minutes of the most recent General Assemblies.

Normally, clerks of presbyteries and synods are elected each year, although many of them are routinely re-elected and serve in the office for many successive years.

There are three clerks who serve the General Assembly — a principal clerk and two deputies. Rev. Stephen Kendall, the current principal clerk, also serves as secretary of the Assembly Council. Barbara McLean is one of the two deputy clerks and serves as an associate secretary in the Assembly office. Rev. Tony Plomp, the second deputy clerk, lives in Richmond, B.C., and offers part-time service. He is appointed for a five-year term. The three clerks consult constantly by e-mail and telephone conferencing and meet together in March and October of each year to prepare legislation for consideration by the Assembly. They also meet the day prior to Assembly in order to brief the new Moderator and to prepare themselves and the Assembly office staff for the hectic activities of Assembly week.

Strictly speaking, the role of the clerks of Assembly ends at the close of each Assembly. As the late principal clerk of Assembly Louis Fowler pointed

out in his book *A Manual for Ruling Elders*: "In reality, from the dissolving of one Assembly to the opening of another, [the clerks] are clerks of that which does not exist. The church, however, not desiring to be painfully consistent, refers to them always as clerks of Assembly, holding office continually, and does not re-elect them at the opening of an Assembly."

Much of the work of the clerk of any court goes on behind the scenes. It is the clerk's privilege to help keep the "machinery" of the court he or she serves functioning as smoothly as possible and to take a supportive role for every member of the court. The office of clerk in the courts of the church is one of trust and confidence. Those who have been called to it know it to be a noble calling and a wonderful avenue of genuine pastoral service within the kingdom of God. **R**

Please send questions for Rev. Tony Plomp to e-mail: TONY_PLOMP@bc.sympatico.ca or 4020 Lancelot Dr., Richmond, B.C. V7C 4S3.

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PEOPLE & PLACES



▲ "THE SPIRIT MOVERS," a liturgical dance group from L'Arche Daybreak, Richmond Hill, Ont., took part in a recent worship service at St. John's Milliken Church, Scarborough, Ont. To the left of the group is its co-ordinator, Kathy Kelly, with clerk of session Bob Shaw.

THREE STAINED GLASS WINDOWS given by the late Dr. Violet Henry in memory of her family were recently dedicated at St. Andrew's Church, Stratford, Ont. Dr. Henry, who died in February 1998 before the windows were completed, was baptized in St. Andrew's. She became a member of the congregation in 1917. Appropriately, the theme for the windows is *Christ the Healer*. In the back row (L to R) are: Pat Brine, Elizabeth Mortlock, George Levy, Ruth Levy, Merle, Ted, Paul and Susan Brine, and Rev. Andrew Fullerton. In the front are Bethany Mortlock, and Kim and Matthew Brine

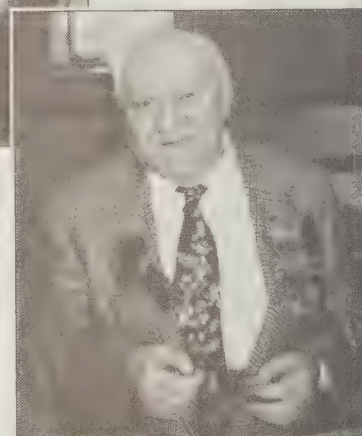


▲ A STAINED GLASS WINDOW with the theme *I AM THAT I AM* was dedicated recently at Amos Church, Dromore, Ont. The window was created by artists David Wilde and Virginia Smith, members of the congregation, and was dedicated in memory of their parents, Robert and Marion Wilde, and Cameron A. Smith.



▲ BREAKFAST WITH THE MODERATOR was the main event when approximately 60 men gathered for the Men's Club meeting at St. John's Church, White Rock, B.C., in March. The Moderator of the 124th General Assembly, William Klempa, is seen providing food for thought to the gathering, which included members from churches in Coquitlam, Whalley, Newton and Surrey, as well as from St. John's Church.

ARTHUR MULLIN'S 85th birthday was celebrated by family and friends at West St. Andrew's Church, St. Catharines, Ont.



Please note: Photos submitted for People & Places must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope if they are to be returned. Also, please try to ensure all pictures are clear and do not include a multitude of people. Colour or black-and-white photos are acceptable, but negatives and slides cannot be used. Thank you.

PEOPLE & PLACES

MEMBERS OF KNOX CHURCH, Kin-cardine, Ont., admire the quilted banner they all had a hand in making. Its dedication commemorated the congregation's 150th anniversary.



MARCUS HASLETT, an elder emeritus and longtime member of Melrose Park Church, Toronto, receives congratulations on the occasion of his 100th birthday (March 11) from Rev. Bill Middleton of Armour Heights Church, Toronto, as son, Bill Haslett, looks on. Melrose Park amalgamated with Armour Heights on Nov. 1, 1998.



THE CHILDREN OF the church school of MacNab Street Church, Hamilton, Ont., along with the congregation, collected \$155 in pennies for an egg program for malnourished children in the hospital in Blantyre, Malawi. Pop cans decorated with pictures of eggs were used to collect the money. Holding one of the cans (for photo purposes, a coffee can) are Erinn Lynch (left) and Anna Lewis, while Julia Post, Samantha Applewaite, Brian Withers and Michael Lynch stand by to help if it gets too heavy.



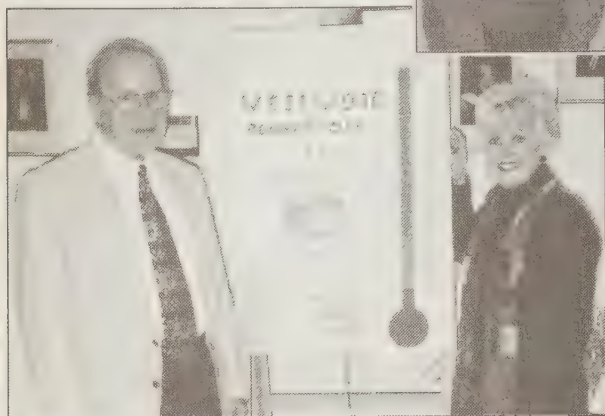
THE 100TH BIRTHDAY of Nina Backus in January was a cause for celebration during the Easter season at St. Andrew's Church, North Battleford, Sask. The occasion was the dedication of a pulpit Bible, given by her daughter, Margaret, and 14 pew Bibles, given by her 14 grandchildren. Nina is pictured at the dedication surrounded by Deanna, Jennifer and Michael Backus, Melany (Backus) Kowalchuk and Rev. Betty Marsh.

REV. JAMES SIMPSON, a former Moderator of the Church of Scotland, chaplain to the Queen, well-known author and frequent contributor to the *Presbyterian Record's* Recordings page, was the guest speaker at First Church, Edmonton, recently. On his right is Rev. Lloyd Fourney, minister of First Church, and on his left is Raymond Grant, reader.



PEOPLE & PLACES

A PROJECT TO RAISE \$10,000 for the victims of Hurricane Mitch went over the top when the congregation of Westwood Church, Winnipeg, raised \$19,161.03. Standing next to the extended thermometer are Ed Bell and Lorna Law.



EVERY FALL for the past few years, students from Eiwa Women's College in Shizuoka, Japan, have enrolled in a special eight-month English program at Vancouver School of Theology. And every fall, a few have been associated with West Point Grey Church, Vancouver — some joining the choir and actively participating in cross-cultural events. In March, four students, as well as a young Japanese woman who is a recent immigrant to Canada, were baptized at West Point Grey after coming under the care of Satoko Akai, the congregation's director of Japanese ministry. Preparing to cut the cake are (L to R): Rie Butsui, Ai Murata, Yoshimi Nambo, Nozomi Ishima (new immigrant) and Asami Hori.



THE YOUTH GROUP OF Kensington Church, Kensington, and St. John's Church, New London, P.E.I., presented the sermon at both churches on Palm Sunday. They chose to introduce the FLAMES Initiative by creating a flannel board replica of the logo.



Each participant talked about one of the six points of emphasis in the initiative and of his/her dreams for the church in that area. On Pentecost Sunday, they presented each congregation with a FLAMES banner. Fanning the FLAMES were Alicia Hartman, Lauren Gallant, Melissa Campbell, Russell Campbell, Ezra MacKay and Keir Campbell.



EIGHTEEN PEOPLE FROM First Church, Brockville, Ont., [the 18th is the photographer] participated in the first annual Canoe Camp for Kids. The group left on a Sunday after worship and returned in time for lunch on the following Tuesday. Armed with lots of enthusiasm, the campers were also aided by the county school board, that loaned them eight canoes; the Boy Scouts, who loaned them some extra tents and a Coleman stove; and the park they stayed in, that waived their camping fees. Fred Bowen, a local high school teacher, was on hand to teach the "tricks of the trade," while the Presbyterian Women of First Church helped the group meet expenses.

THE FOUR MINISTERS who serve the Presbyterian churches in the Chateauguay Valley formed a rink for the Annual Wooden Block Curling Bonspiel held at Riverfield Curling Club in Riverfield, Que. Providing entertainment for the other curlers were: Kate Jordan, Lynne Donovan, Bonnie Mason and John McPhadden. The Riverfield congregation later presented Bonnie Mason, who served as skip, with a skunk. (Photo: Phil Norton)





◀ PAULINE BROWN was the guest speaker at Knox Church, Sooke, B.C., on Sunday, Feb. 21. On Monday, she spoke at an evening service at St. Columba Church, Parksville, B.C. Pauline was recently in Canada on furlough from her work with the Community Health Program of the Church of North India and with Jobat Hospital. She is pictured with Rev. Noel Kinnon, interim minister of Knox Church.



▲ THE CONGREGATION OF Knox Church, Dundas, Ont., honoured Bob Weavers (right) and his wife, Barbara, on the occasion of his retirement after 36 years as church treasurer. Congratulating the Weavers is Jack Woodley.



◀ A HERITAGE AWARD was presented to the congregation of St. Andrew's Church, Windsor, Ont., by the Windsor Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee in recognition of restoration done to the 103-year-old church building. Displaying the certificate is Jean Douglas Willms, chair of the history committee.

Crieff Hills Community Seeks a Chaplain

Crieff Hills Community, a Christian retreat and conference centre owned and operated by The Presbyterian Church in Canada, requires a CHAPLAIN. Crieff Hills Community (CHC), with its 17 full- and part-time staff and 11 buildings, is located less than an hour's drive west of Toronto.

We seek a Chaplain whose responsibilities will include:

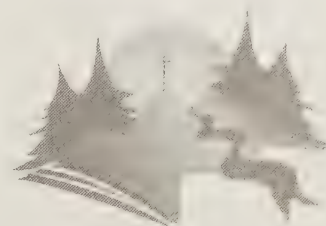
- providing spiritual guidance in the ongoing planning, development and programming at CHC
- offering pastoral care and counsel to staff, volunteers and on-site visitors
- acting as a liaison within the courts of our church.

CHC is governed by the Maclean Estate Committee (MEC) which uses the Carver Model. The Chaplain will serve as an ex-officio member of the MEC and as an active member of the Program Advisory Group.

This position, beginning on January 1, 2000, is budgeted for up to 10 hours/week for an initial 3-year term, but this may increase based on continuing priorities and program review. The Chaplain must be a Minister of Word and Sacraments in The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Please forward résumé, on or before September 30, 1999, to:

The Convener
Maclean Estate Committee
c/o Crieff Hills Community
R R 2
Puslinch, ON N0B 2J0
Fax: (519) 824-7145
Attn: Chaplain Search





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REVIEWS

A Golden Treasury of Puritan Devotion compiled and edited by Mariano Di Gangi (Presbyterian and Reformed, 1999, \$17.50). Reviewed by John Vaudry.

To many people (even some in the Church), the word "Puritan" conjures up an image of mean-spirited, joyless prudes self-righteously meddling in other folks' lives. Modern scholarship has shown this is largely a misconception; the real Puritans were men and women mainly concerned with experiencing and rejoicing in the grace of God in Jesus Christ, and ordering their personal lives, families and churches according to the Word of God.

This book consists of brief excerpts from 13 Puritan divines of the 16th and 17th centuries — some of them famous, others obscure, all richly biblical, theological and deeply spiritual. They range from the profundities of Stephen Charnock's *Existence and Attributes of God* to the down-to-earth evangelism and pastoral wisdom of John Bunyan's *Jerusalem Sinner Saved*.

Anyone who has not encountered the writings of the English Puritans before will be helped by the background given in the short introduction, as well as by the thumb-nail sketches of the writers prefixed to each chapter. We learn, for example, the Puritans were not a monolithic group. Some were Presbyterians and others Episcopalians or Independents. Most believed in infant baptism, but some did not. Yet, all were Trinitarian, all held a high view of Scripture and all were evangelistic. Most were Calvinists. These writings reveal their "admirable balance ... the redemptive work of Christ for us, and the renovating ministry of His Spirit in us."

Former minister of Knox Church in Toronto, Mariano Di Gangi, is well-known as a pastor, preacher, professor

and promoter of missions (not to mention biographer and translator of Italian Reformer Peter Martyr Vermigli). The task of sifting through thousands of pages of classic spirituality to produce this sampler has obviously been a labour of love. In this, we see something of what has fuelled Di Gangi's own life and ministry.

Here are a few quotes to whet your appetite:

"Divine goodness is eminent in the sacraments he has joined to this [new] covenant, especially in the Lord's Supper ... There is not only a *commemoration* of Christ dying, but a *communication* of Christ living (I Corinthians 10:16, 17)."

— Stephen Charnock

"Grace conquers us first, and we by it conquer all things — whether it be corruptions within us, or temptations without us."

— Richard Sibbes

"Many reproofs are lost, because there is more of passion than compassion in them. It is spiritual cruelty when you can turn a finger in your brother's wound without grief."

— Thomas Manton

This is a good book to dip into, read slowly and use as a springboard for prayer and worship.

John Vaudry is minister of St. Andrew's Church, Wingham, Ont.

The George Grant Reader edited by William Christian and Sheila Grant (University of Toronto, 1998, \$31.75). Reviewed by Harris Athanasiadis.

Who was George Parkin Grant? Some will know of his grandfather George Monro Grant, a key leader in the movement toward Presbyterian union in 1875 and the principal of Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario. But George was not as

involved in church life. Indeed, although he had Presbyterian roots, as an adult he became a member of the United Church and, later, turned to the Anglican Church hoping to find a worship experience with greater reverence for ancient truths. Eventually, he became disillusioned with ecclesiastical institutions altogether.

So why ought we to have any interest in him? Many have characterized Grant as one of the most original political philosophers Canada has produced. Already, before his death in 1988, there were symposiums held on his thought; since his death, there have been numerous books and articles devoted to him, including a major biography. *The George Grant Reader* reflects the growing interest in his thought and is aimed at the broadest audience yet.

Grant may be characterized as a philosopher, but this can scarcely do justice to the variety of issues he tackled and his unique approach to thought. In fact, he alienated himself from the academic philosophical community by defining himself as a Christian philosopher who sought to think the truths of revelation in a secular and pluralistic age. To characterize him more precisely, one could say that, philosophically, he was a Platonist; ecclesiastically, he was a Protestant rooted in the Reformation theology of the cross; spiritually, he was a mystic who had an experience of God in the midst of the Second World War; and, politically, he was a Canadian nationalist who combined the best of socialist and conservative visions in his unique and rich brand of Red Toryism.

Grant tackled issues ranging from technological globalization and economic liberalism to free-trade and Quebec nationalism, the public education system, the development of ethical pluralism and secularism in modern society, euthanasia and abortion, the decline and fall of Christendom, and the meaning of Christ and the cross for faith and life in the world. He struggled with many thinkers and movements of thought from Plato and mysticism to Nietzsche and existentialism and, above all, found in the mystic Simone Weil a getaway into bringing his

philosophy and faith together in a meaningful and personal way. Even though many have interpreted Grant as a pessimist, he felt his thought to be spiritual cleansing in the form of negative theology — “bringing to light the darkness as darkness” in order to prepare the soul for the light of God or “the good” (Plato).

The Reader offers a taste of the many faceted Grant along with helpful and succinct background information in the introduction and at the beginning of each selection. There is something here for everyone, whether one be inclined to the practical, spiritual or intellectual. But at whatever point one approaches Grant, one is confronted by a powerful mind and a profound spirit seeking to communicate at all levels the implications of faith in God in today’s world.

Harris Athanasiadis is minister of St. Mark’s Church in Don Mills, Ont.

Of Fiction and Faith: Twelve American Writers Talk about Their Vision and Work by W. Dale Brown (*Eerdmans*, 1997, \$34). Reviewed by John Congram.

Interviews with four of my favourite authors drew me to this book: Frederick Buechner (Presbyterian minister and novelist), Will Campbell (writer, civil rights leader and renegade Baptist preacher), Garrison Keillor (story-teller), and Walter Wangerin (Lutheran pastor and writer). I discovered two of the other writers are also Presbyterians: Doris Betts, an elder, church school teacher and part-time organist in a Presbyterian church; and Robert Goldsborough, a Presbyterian elder in a Chicago suburb.

Devotees of “the whodunits” will want to read the interview with Goldsborough, the continuator of the Nero Wolfe novels. As well, Peggy Payne’s first novel is “the story of Swain Hammond, a Presbyterian cleric whose routine is dramatically disturbed when he tells his parishioners that, while barbecuing in his backyard, he heard the voice of God.” This Presbyterian influence is perhaps understandable because the inter-

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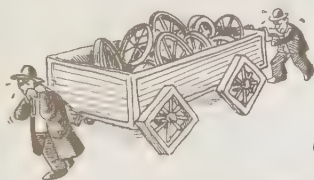
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REVIEWS

viewer is W. Dale Brown, professor of English at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

This is an excellent book for anyone who is a writer or wants to be a writer, especially of short stories or novels. These 12 authors talk candidly about their careers, their audiences, their approaches to writing and their attitudes to issues of faith. Sometimes, it is a bit confusing when they discuss a work you have not read. On the other hand, it is an excellent introduction to a new writer you may not have considered before.

Almost all have a love-hate relationship with organized religion. They also feel critics and popular culture are prejudiced against them because of their Christian faith. Buechner, for example, has long railed against the fact that some consider him too secular to be taken seriously by the religious community while the secular community thinks he is too religious to be taken seriously as a novelist.

In some interviews, I felt the interviewer too often imposed his own thoughts and ideas to the detriment of the one being interviewed. He does not do it with everyone. But with Buechner, whom he obviously admires and knows well, he sometimes gets carried away with his own enthusiasm. At that point, the interview would better be termed a conversation between W. Dale Brown and Frederick Buechner. Another frustration I had was, when Brown introduced a subject, he sometimes suddenly shifted to another topic without giving the one being interviewed an opportunity to respond adequately.

However, this is a small price to pay. If you like to read fiction writers who explore great biblical themes honestly, but who don't like being called "Christian writers" and who hate "Christian book stores" that don't carry their books, you will enjoy these interviews.

Most books reviewed may be purchased through The Book Room, 50 Wynford Dr., North York, Ont. M3C 1J7. Do not send payment with order. An invoice will follow. Please include name and location of congregation. Toll-free order line: 1-800-619-7301, ext. 301, e-mail: bookroom@presbyterian.ca.

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DEATHS

EVANS, REV. DR. DILLWYN THOMAS, BA, DD, 83, died March 18, 1999, at Lindsay, Ontario. His funeral service was held at St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Lindsay.

Dillwyn was born in Wales November 15, 1915. The family immigrated to Canada. His father was Rev. Lloyd Evans. He attended Jarvis Ontario High School, studied arts at the universities of Toronto and Alberta, and theology at Knox College which conferred on him the Doctor of Divinity degree.

After student ministry at Killam, Alberta, his pastorates were Norwood, Winnipeg; St. Paul's, Ingersoll, and Thornhill, Ontario. From 1950-53, he was assistant superintendent of missions for Western Canada and Northwestern Ontario, and director of Presbyterian Residence, Saskatoon. In 1975, he was appointed superintendent of missions for Saskatchewan. He had a life-long love for Western Canada. In active retirement, he continued in joyful pastoral counselling ministries at Glenview and Queen St. East, Toronto, and Richmond Hill, Ontario. Always an active presbyter, he served as moderator of presbyteries and synods in which he ministered. He was elected Moderator of the 86th General Assembly, June 1970.

Dillwyn ministered to children and youth in many personal, unique ways. He was an enthusiastic supporter of the Thornhill Church Hockey League. He was a man of prayer with a passion for preaching, the mission of Christ and peace. As member and convener of the Board of World Mission for many years, he contributed greatly to the church's missionary work in Canada and overseas.

He ministered intentionally to the wider community. School principals, funeral directors, prison officials called when someone needed help. He was always there for AA members. Winnipeg awarded him its ceremonial key to the city for his contributions to its life. Ingersoll made him Citizen of the Year. The Jewish innkeeper at the Holiday Inn, Don Mills, Ontario, appointed him volunteer chaplain for counselling staff and travellers. His was a strong ecumenical spirit firmly anchored in the Reformed faith. Always grateful for his Welsh heritage, he was a proud Canadian. He loved

curling, baseball, hockey and soccer.

August 15, 1942, he married Lee (Lelia) Sparrow, RN, who survives him. God blessed their long, happy marriage with three daughters: Rhonda, Judy and Glenda; six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. His twin sister, Midge Hopkins, also survives him.

GRAHAM, REV. ELIZABETH ANGELA, 45. Elizabeth was well-known in many congregations within the Presbytery of Montreal for her enthusiasm and imagination, especially in her work with young people where she put her previous experience in theatre to good use.

BELL, ISABELLE (ALEXANDER), 93, longtime member, St. David's Presbyterian Church, Halifax; charter member of the Janet Andrews Auxiliary; life member of the WMS (Eastern Division), passed away suddenly in Morden, Man., April 30, 1999.

BENDER, MURRAY, 64, elder and active supporter of Knox Presbyterian Church, Listowel, Ont., on April 23, 1999.

CLELAND, GEORGE, 88, longtime member and elder of Knox Presbyterian Church, Listowel, Ont., Feb. 20, 1999.

DINGWALL, GEORGE, former elder, choir member 35 years, Bonar-Parkdale Church, Toronto, Dec. 11, 1998.

INSTANCE, FREDERICK GEORGE, died May 3, 1999. Born March 13, 1921, in Minnedosa, Man., spent most of his life in Winnipeg. Married Joanne Wright and had 42 happy years together. He leaves wife Joanne, three sons, a daughter and six grandchildren. Served overseas 1941-1945 with the Fifth Canadian Armored Division. Member of St. James Church, Winnipeg; ordained an elder 1967; served as clerk of session 1979-1985; church treasurer 1985-1996; representative elder; and member of various presbytery committees. A faithful servant of his Lord and diligent in all he undertook, Fred will be sadly missed.

LOCKHURST, MARILYN JEAN, 61, passed away April 30 after a lengthy illness. She was a faithful member and active ruling elder of Tweedsmuir Memorial Presbyterian Church, Orangeville, Ont. Marilyn is survived by husband Tom; daughter Betty Jean; sons Bill, Jamie, Tom, David; and 10 grandchildren. She will be sadly missed by her family, church friends and the community.

McPHAIL, MURRAY HUNTER, in his 86th year, died Feb. 14, 1999. Murray was a longtime member of St. David's Presbyterian Church, Campbellville, Ont., until his retirement and subsequent move to Guelph, Ont., where he joined Knox Presbyterian Church. Over the years, he was involved as choir member, choir director, Sunday school superintendent and elder of St. David's Church, Campbellville, Ont. Murray is survived by his wife Mary, son Larry, daughter Margie and their families.

MILLER, JAMES ALLAN, longtime and faithful member and elder of St. Peter's Presbyterian Church, Madoc, Ont., passed away at the Belleville General Hospital on April 20, 1999, in his 89th year.

POLLOCK, MARY, 81, received into membership March 1931, faithful member of the WMS, St. Andrew's, St. Lambert, Que., May 3, 1999.

ROSE, EVELYN, member for five years, Alexandra, Brantford, Ont., April 28.

SADLER, RUTH, member and elder, First Presbyterian Church, Winnipeg, on April 25, 1999.

TYSON, BEATRICE, faithful member for 63 years, Women's Group and Guild member, Alexandra, Brantford, Ont., April 9, 1999.

INDUCTIONS and RECOGNITIONS

Thompson, Rev. Lorna, St. Andrew's, Burnbrae; St. Andrew's, Campbellford, Ont., Jan. 10.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES and INTERIM MODERATORS

Synod of the Atlantic Provinces

Harvey Station, N.B., Knox and Acton. Rev. Philip Lee, 311 Bay Crescent Dr., Saint John, N.B. E2M 6M1.

Lower Sackville, N.S., First Sackville. Rev. Cynthia Chenard, Box 2554, Dartmouth, N.S. B2W 4B7.

Miramichi, N.B., St. James. Rev. Mel Fawcett, 395 Murray Ave., Bathurst, N.B. E2A 1T4.

Moncton, N.B., St. Andrew's. Rev. Andrew Hutchinson, 600 Coverdale Rd., Riverview, N.B. E1B 3K6.

New Glasgow, N.S., Westminster. Rev. Glenn Cooper, Box 1078, Westville, N.S. B0K 2A0.

River John, N.S., St. George's; Toney River, St. David's. Rev. Kenneth MacLeod, Box 185, New Glasgow, N.S. B2H 5E2.

The Transitions column welcomes announcements of special events such as births, marriages, anniversaries, baptisms and the reception of new members, as well as death notices. The rate is 90 cents per word or \$43 per column inch (the lower amount) plus GST.

All notices of pulpit vacancies, recognitions, ordinations and inductions will be charged to presbyteries: \$10 for the basic notice and 90 cents per word for additional information. (There will be no charge to congregations on the Every Home or Club 50 plans.)

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St. John's, Nfld., St. David's. Rev. Ian S. Wishart, 5 Chestnut Place, St. John's, Nfld. A1B 2T1.

Springhill, N.S., St. David's; Oxford, St. James; Riverview, St. Andrew's. Rev. Mark McLennan, RR 2, Scotsburn, N.S. B0K 1R0. Summerside, P.E.I., Summerside Church. Rev. Christine Schulze, Box 32, Tyne Valley, P.E.I. C0B 2C0.

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Beaconsfield, Que., Briarwood. Rev. Glynis Williams, Action Réfugiés Montreal, 1410 Guy, Montreal, Que. H3H 2L7.

Beauharnois, Que., St. Edward's; Valleyfield, Valleyfield Church (part-time). Search Committee, 79 St. Georges St., Beauharnois, Que. J6N 1Y9.

Dunvegan, Ont., Kenyon; Kirk Hill, St. Columba. Rev. Edward O'Neill, Box 7, Maxville, Ont. K0C 1T0.

Fort-Coulonge, Que., St. Andrew's; Bristol, Bristol Memorial. Rev. Ruth Syme, Box 1983, Deep River, Ont. K0J 1P0.

Ingleside, Ont., St. Matthew's (part-time). Rev. Ian MacMillan, 18220 S. Branch Rd., Cornwall, Ont. K6H 5R6.

Montreal, Chambit Church. Rev. Barry Mack, 496 Birch Ave., St. Lambert, Que. J4P 2M8.

Montreal, Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul. Rev. J.C. McLelland, 121 Alston Rd., Pointe-Claire, Que. H9R 3E2.

Montreal, Knox Crescent Kensington and First. Rev. Richard Topping, 3415 Redpath St., Montreal, Que. H3G 2G2.

Montreal, Korean. Rev. John Kim, 298 Rudar Rd., Mississauga, Ont. L5A 1S3.

Montreal, Maisonneuve-St. Cuthbert's. Rev. Coralie Jackson-Bissonnette, 5545 Snowdon Ave., Montreal, Que. H3X 1Y8.

Pierrefonds, Que., Westminster. Rev. James Douglas, 1345 Lapointe, St. Laurent, Que. H4L 1K5.

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Bowmanville, St. Andrew's. Rev. David McBride, PO Box 311, Port Hope, Ont. L1A 3W4.

Brampton, St. Andrew's. Rev. Peter Barrow, 38 Edith St., Georgetown, Ont. L7G 3B1.

Cambridge, Knox's Galt. Rev. Kevin Livingston, St. Andrew's Hespeler Church, 73 Queen St. E, Cambridge, Ont. N3C 2A9.

Claude, Claude Church. Rev. Gerald Rennie, 67 Churchill Rd. N, Acton, Ont. L7J 2H9.

Collingwood, First (two ministers). Rev. James Kitson, 539 Hugel Ave., Midland, Ont. L4R 1W1.

Guelph, Knox. Rev. Linda Bell, 2 Cross St., Elmira, Ont. N3B 2S5.

Hillsdale, St. Andrew's; Craighurst, Knox (half-time). Rev. Tim Purvis, Box 26, Stayner, Ont. L0M 1S0.

King City, St. Andrew's. Rev. Daniel D. Scott, 107 Compton Cres., Bradford, Ont. L3Z 2X7.

Kitchener, Calvin. Rev. Angus Sutherland, Central Presbyterian Church, Queen's Square, Cambridge, Ont. N1S 1H4.

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Hagersville, St. Andrew's; Port Dover, Knox. Rev. Thomas G. Vais, 117 Argyle St. N, Caledonia, Ont. N3W 1B8.

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ArithmeCode by Dave Mitchell

Find the value of each symbol by doing the arithmetic. Replace each symbol with the letter which corresponds to its value to find the *ArithmeCode* word below. Category: **BURNING BUSH**

- i $(60\% \text{ of } 40) - (46 \div 2) = \bullet$
- ii $(3/7 \text{ of } 14) + (8.3 + \bullet + 11.7) = \square$
- iii $1/3 \text{ of } (\square + \bullet - 1) = \blacksquare$
- iv $0.75 \times (\blacksquare + \square) = \blacklozenge$
- v $(\square - \bullet) \div (\blacklozenge - 16 - 9) = \blacklozenge$

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z		
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ArithmeCode answer from last issue: **MALTA**

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A Child's Way

A page to share with the children you love

Written by Karen Timbers,
minister of Elmwood Avenue
Church, London, Ont.

One Child Helps Thousands

Scripture Reading: John 6:1-14

Read this expanded story:

"Paul, you forgot your lunch!" his mom shouted. Paul was on his way to hear Jesus speak. Everyone was talking about him. Many said he was a prophet. "You have a long way to walk, Paul. Take these loaves of barley bread and fish."

"Yes, Mom, don't worry. I'll be fine!" Paul called as he ran down the road waving. He walked for a long time. When he finally sat down to rest and have a drink, a thin, hungry dog approached him. Paul thought about his own hunger but gave the dog a fish. "Oh, well," he thought, "I still have plenty to eat."

He walked on for a long time when an old man approached. "Young man," he said, "I have not eaten in three days. Do you have any food to spare?" Paul reached into his bag and gave the man a couple of fish and a loaf of bread. His lunch was growing smaller by the minute.

Later, he came upon a group of women sitting beside the road. They were crying. "What is wrong?" he asked. "Why are you so upset?"

"Our crops died. Our children are hungry, and we have nothing to give them," one woman said.

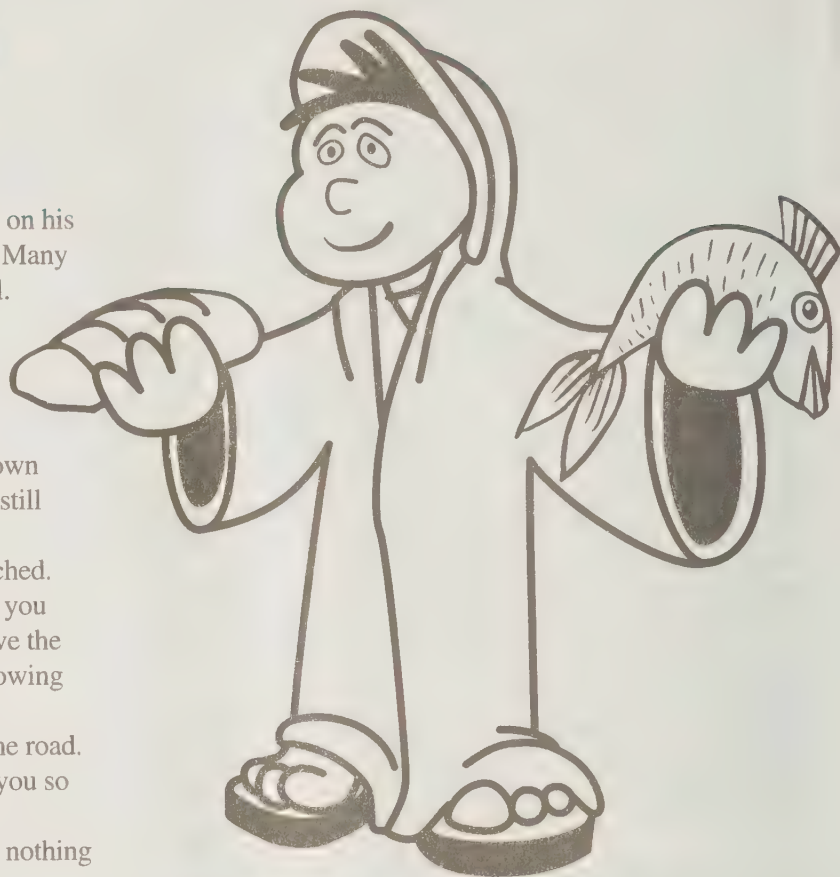
Paul felt sad. He reached quickly into his bag. "Here, take this. I will keep five loaves and two fish for my own lunch, but you can have the rest."

When Paul arrived where Jesus was, he settled in with the crowd. He was amazed by what Jesus was saying.

Later, one of Jesus' friends shouted, "Does anyone have any food for the crowd?" Paul looked at the thousands of people and glanced at his small lunch. Then he heard the man say, "Jesus is asking for anything you have to feed the crowd." Paul thought about his own hunger but he also wanted to help Jesus.

"I only have five loaves and two fish," he shouted. The man took them from him, laughing at the small amount. Paul felt silly for offering so little. But something amazing happened. Jesus fed the thousands of people with *his* lunch, and there were 12 baskets of food left over!

Because Paul shared his lunch, Jesus was able to feed everyone. Paul felt good inside. He couldn't wait to tell his mom what happened to her bread.



Questions to consider

1. What would you do if you met someone who was hungry?
2. How does it feel when you help other people?
3. How do you think Jesus still performs miracles today?

Things to do

- Bake bread and deliver it to someone you know who may not have enough to eat.
- Visit a local food bank to see how small gifts of food help many people who would otherwise go hungry.
- Have a meal of fish, bread and water at your church. Talk about this story and sing the prayer song below. Invite the congregation to give a donation to help people who are poor.

Prayer Song

(Tune: *Row, Row, Row Your Boat*)

Five loaves and two fish given by one small boy
Became the meal for thousands more. Helping
brings great joy.
Became the meal for thousands more. Helping
brings great joy.

A note to adults reading this page:

No child is too young to learn the benefits and responsibilities of Christian stewardship and mission. No gift is too insignificant to make a difference. Give children regular opportunities to respond to the needs of others.

Like a Ring of Bright Water

by David Webber

That's strange!" "What on earth are you talking about?" asked Linda.

"This unidentified flying object floating on the lake," I answered.

"You mean a spaceship on pontoons? Sometimes I really wonder about your imagination." Linda left her morning coffee to join me at the window.

We both peered out into the summer morning sunlight. Sure enough, what we saw was a ring with sparkling lights glinting through windows all around its extremity. It looked like a flying saucer floating on the water. "See, I told ya," I chimed back with certain glee.

Linda stared at the ring floating down Lac La Hache. "That's not a flying saucer," she said. "It's some kind of animal. In fact, it's more than one."

"It doesn't look like any animal I've ever seen. If it's not a flying saucer, it's gotta be some kind of huge diamond ring. It's perfectly round and the sun is glinting off diamonds set all around the ring." My imagination was about to speed-shift into overdrive. However, before I could start hypothesizing, Linda ruined everything and went after the binoculars.

"It's a ring of otters!" Linda exclaimed. "Awww, look at them. It's just like in the book *Ring of Bright Water*."

When we looked through the binoculars, we could see a family of otters with all the adults, about five of them, lying on their backs in a perfect circle. Every so often, an adult would dive down in the centre of the ring and come up with a small fish or a freshwater mussel. After the successful hunt, it would find its place in the circle and put the food on its stomach to clean and prepare it for dining.

Meanwhile, in the centre of the circle, there were several young otters. They were totally engrossed in playing, diving

and splashing. Droplets of water from their playing caught the morning sunlight, glistening like diamonds. Every so often, one of the young otters approached one of the adults in the outer circle and received a piece of food.

From the deck, we could hear that this ring of bright water was anything but silent. A background of chuckling, blowing and cooing seemed to give the whole thing an aura of song and contentment. We also noticed the ring exuded a sense of providence and security. Not only was the ring a centre for food procurement and sharing, but there was something about it that seemed to tell the eagles, ever-roosting on the old dead snag on the island opposite our house, that this group of animals was not to be messed with. Normally, these predatory eagles would swoop from their roost to investigate whatever looked vulnerable, either on the lake or on the shoreline. However, even though the eagles were perched at battle stations this morning, they didn't show the slightest interest in the ring of bright water.

Much of the rest of the morning was consumed by the ring of bright water as it was moved slowly down the lake by a gentle breeze. It was so fascinating that, when it eventually drifted from our view, Linda and I were tempted to get into the Chestnut canoe and sneak along the shore to continue our observations. That we did not succumb to temptation was due to a house church meeting at Nazko, three hours drive to the north.

The afternoon drive, much of it in the silence of friendship, was time for processing the observations of the morning. As so often happens when I contemplate nature, my thoughts took the

morning's observations for a wander through Scripture.

Scripture is full of words and metaphors that describe the church or a people of God. There is the Apostle Paul's metaphor "Body of Christ." There are word pictures in the Hebrew Scriptures: "my people" and "house of Israel." The list is extensive in both testaments, each word picture or metaphor conveying something rich in terms of people's relationships to each other and to their

God. After spending the morning watching the otters, and the afternoon taking the otter experience into Scripture, I could not help thinking in parable about the Church.

What is the Church like? What metaphor could help us appreciate it? The Church is like a ring of bright water, a family of otters. The ring is formed by the mature and wise. By experience, they know what is dangerous and how to provide care. They form the ring for protection and nurture and to define a space for the younger and less experienced to be free to play and to learn. Those of the outer circle provide nurture and teaching. Those of the inner circle provide freedom, in thought and action, that brings joy and beauty to all as the sun turns the splashing of their exuberant energy into the likes of diamonds.

The ring of bright water is formed in the water. It is the medium by which each otter finds its way into the ring. Although the water is not the ring, it is crucial for its formation. What is the Church like? It is like a ring of bright water. **R**

David Webber is a minister of the Cariboo Presbyterian Church, a house church ministry in the Cariboo district of British Columbia.



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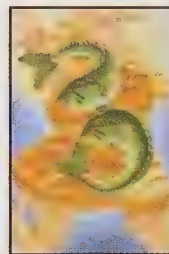
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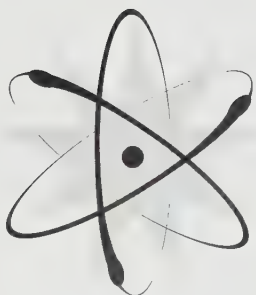
September 1999



**Fanning the FLAMES of ...
MISSION**

Many of today's young people have little difficulty believing that God is in Christ, but what they find hard to accept is that Christ is in the Church.

— Ernest T. Campbell,
quoted in *Presbyterian Herald*



"One definition of the word moderator: 'a material used for slowing down neutrons in the cores of nuclear reactors so they have a better chance of inducing nuclear fission.'"

— from an interview with
Arthur Van Seters in *Christian Week*. His reaction:
"That's pretty much what I've been experiencing."

The Assembly Council will "carry out its business and communications in a manner that demonstrates faithfulness, openness and transparency ..."

— from the revised
terms of reference for
its operation

Toronto has long considered itself the archetypal Canadian place. In the view of some of its Scots Presbyterian elite, it not only defined Canada, it was Canada.

— from the article "Canada 2005:
Changing Tapestry," *Time*, May 31, 1999

Toronto Cleric and His Daughter Shot in Formosa

TAIPEI, FORMOSA, JUNE 2 (TUESDAY) (BUP) — A Toronto missionary and his daughter were shot and seriously wounded early today by two unidentified gunmen who broke into the Canadian Presbyterian mission here.

The victims, Rev. George W. Mackay, D.D., and his daughter, Isabel, were taken to University Hospital.

Dr. Mackay was being treated for a bullet wound in the stomach and Miss Mackay for a serious wound in the leg.

British consulate officials would not comment on the shooting beyond saying that there was apparently no reason for the attack.

— *The Globe and Mail*, June 2, 1953

God's Billboards

"God Speaks" billboards have been receiving attention in the United States. These anonymous billboards are printed in white text on a black background. A few examples:

Let's meet at my house Sunday before the game. — God

What part of "Thou shalt not ..." didn't you understand? — God

Keep using my name in vain, I'll make rush hour longer. — God

That "Love thy neighbour" thing ... I meant it. — God

You think it's hot here? — God

Have you read my #1 best-seller? There will be a test. — God

How and Why People Come to Christian Faith Today

Special need	1-2%
Visitation	1-2%
Church program	2-3%
Walk-ins	2-3%
Mass evangelism	.5%
Church school	4-5%
Minister and staff	1-6%
Friends and relatives	75-90%

— Charles Arn

Uneasy Partner

Non-Christians will insist that we should keep our religion out of the way of their politics. But the reason for that is not that Jesus has nothing to do with the public realm; it is that they want nothing to do with Jesus as Lord.

— John Howard Yoder,
quoted in *Christianity Today*



All of the Above

The spell check on my computer didn't recognize the word "pastoring" and suggested the following alternatives (synonyms?): pasturing, pestering, posturing. (They didn't have an option for "all of the above.")

— submitted by Glenn Cooper



After the Bombs Stopped: Agonizing Over Kosovo

The war in Kosovo has finally ended — at least, our part in the bombing. Readers may feel it's a bit late for comment now from a relatively safe distance when at least some of the issues seem to have been settled. Why not take a chance in the heat of the battle to say something for or against what was happening and NATO's action?

I agree. One should not be able to read this magazine and remain unaware of the great and shattering events taking place in the world around us. Sacred history cannot be processed in isolation from secular history. Or, as Karl Barth reminded us in his oft-quoted remark, we must read our Bible in one hand with the daily newspaper in the other. But, sometimes, it is not easy to do.

If you were like me, your support for the action in Kosovo changed more frequently than the daily weather forecast. Canadians, along with the other nations of NATO, faced a difficult choice — do nothing and watch a people systematically destroyed, continue to negotiate as the death and destruction escalated, or intervene with the risk that everyone would be killed.

On some days, I was drawn to the views of columnist Kathy Cawsey (June *Record*). When was the last time you saw a people bombed into submission? The ends did not seem to justify the means. Were the people we were trying to help really helped? A friend argued that those who supported the bombing mission were reacting in a knee-jerk, militaristic fashion.

However, on another day, I listened to Elie Wiesel, the celebrated novelist and Holocaust survivor. Although agonizing over both options, he supported the bombing as the lesser of evils. He had once been where the Kosovo Albanians were.

The arguments of Czech President Vaclav Havel were also hard to resist. "This is probably the first war ever fought that is not being fought in the name of interests, but in the name of certain principles and values," he stated during a visit to Canada in April. NATO "is fighting," he went on, "because decent people cannot sit back and watch systematic, state-directed massacres of other people." Havel saw the action as an important principle by which the world recognizes a human being is more important than the state. One cannot too quickly or too easily reject the response of one who knows the inside of prisons for standing up against oppression.

On some days, I felt there was nothing more to say about Kosovo than what Rev. Dale Lang said after his 17-year-old son had been gunned down in a senseless murder in his school: "May God have mercy on this broken society and all the hurting people."

Statements of churches in the war-torn area have been encouraging. The Orthodox Church of Albania, a small group of

Christians in an overwhelmingly Muslim country, stated: "We wholeheartedly participate in the pain of those who are suffering because of injustice and violence due to the crisis in Kosovo. We are not in a position to make eloquent speeches or easy statements in this extremely difficult situation. But, interceding daily for those who love and hate us, we humbly pray to the God of truth and love to perform his miracle so that peace and justice prevail over the troubled area."

The seeming success of force must not encourage us to give up our search for peace

The Serbian Orthodox Church called for the removal of Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic and admitted some of its own people had committed atrocities in Kosovo. Father Sava of the Decani monastery in western Kosovo said it was time the Serbs opened their eyes to what their leadership had done to them.

The worst possible outcome of the "success" of the Kosovo operation would be for good people to believe that dropping bombs is the best, or only, way to bring solutions to similar conflicts. Or that the seeming success of force will encourage us to give up our search for peace and commitment to peaceful solutions.

In this conflict, Canadians discovered what is probably true for all conflicts but not always evident — we cannot stand on the sidelines with clean and unstained hands. Perhaps, it is better to say little but do much. And there is much to do for those who believe the good news in Jesus includes the miraculous possibility that the barriers of race, age, class, pride, fear and violence can be overcome.

During the days of carnage in Kosovo, the words of Teilhard de Chardin — priest, philosopher, theologian and paleontologist — kept ringing in my head: "Some day, after we have mastered the winds, the waves, the tide of gravity, we shall harness for God the energies of love; and, then, for the second time in history, man will have discovered fire."

May we pray and work that this time will dawn quickly.

John Congram

Volume CXXIII, No. 8
September 1999
ISSN 0032-7573

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Published on the first of each month except
August by The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

The *Presbyterian Record*, national magazine of
The Presbyterian Church in Canada, is responsi-
ble to the General Assembly. It exists to publish
issues relative to Christian faith and a selection of
current and timely news analyses and opinions of
interest or importance to Presbyterians across
Canada.

Member of The Canadian Church Press and
The Associated Church Press.

Publications Mail Registration No. 09634
Postage paid at Mississauga, Ontario.
Return postage guaranteed.
Send label only.

Subscription Rates

Individual: \$15
Every Home Plan (80% families subscribe): \$9
Club 50 Plan (50% families subscribe): \$11
U.S.A. and Foreign: \$20
Single Copies: \$2
All prices include GST.

Acceptance of advertising does not imply
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The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Address all correspondence and changes of
address (include label from magazine) to:

Presbyterian Record
50 Wynford Drive
Toronto, Ontario M3C 1J7
Phone: (416) 441-1111
Fax: (416) 441-2825

E-mail: pcrecord@presbyterian.ca
Web site: www.presbycan.ca/record

FROM THE MODERATOR

Arthur
Van Seters



Getting a Sense of “The Jubilee Thing”

Jubilee Benediction

Jubilee is the announcement
of God's new beginning
based on grace and generosity.

May God, who called life into being,
give us awe and respect
for the whole of God's creation.

May the crucified and risen Christ
break the chains of sin and injustice
and proclaim Good News to the poor.

May the Holy Spirit of promise
inspire us with vision and courage
to live as God's Jubilee people. Amen.

— Arthur Van Seters

In the months ahead, as we move to-
ward the turn of the millennium, many
will speak and write about “Jubilee.”
What's it all about? I offered a number of
comments last month; but I want to de-
scribe, however briefly, my own journey
of discovery.

The biblical vision of Jubilee in
Leviticus 25 celebrates the sabbath of
sabbaths (the fiftieth year). It is ancient
legislation that calls for a radical redistri-
bution of economic arrangements
through the renewal of the earth, remis-
sion of debts and the release of those en-
slaved because of debt. It emphasizes the
importance of the extended family unit.

This is a perspective, as I warned pre-
viously, that contemporary Western soci-
eties will find impractical and utterly

naïve. Churches, therefore, will be tempted to ignore or rationalize this theme away
despite its timeliness in a world in desperate need of realigning increasing disparities
between rich and poor.

The issue here is not primarily one of different political and social readings of real-
ity around us. Rather, the central question is whether Christians are compelled by the
gospel to shape our lives by this vision.

I did not come to this conviction naturally, easily or quickly. Back in 1981, I was
in Central America on sabbatical. I was overwhelmed by the abject poverty all around
me. I was shocked by the gross unfairness of land distribution between campesinos
who had been farming for centuries and multinational corporations who controlled
more and more of the countryside. This became a profoundly spiritual experience for
me — a conversion of the way I read the Bible. The poor and God's concern for the
poor became everywhere evident, especially in the preaching of Jesus. This affected
my own preaching, but I still did not
make the connection with Jubilee.

Two years ago, my Knox College col-
league Stephen Farris proposed that I
write a paraphrase of Isaiah 58 for the
forthcoming General Council of the
World Alliance of Reformed Churches in
Debrecen, Hungary. The theme of the
Council was “Break the Chains of Injus-
tice” (taken from verse 6). I produced the
paraphrase but, again, failed to see the
connection with the Leviticus passage.

(Continued on page 37)

Moderator's Itinerary

September 16
Habitat for Humanity building site

September 25-26
St. John's, Winnipeg

September 25 - October 4
Winnipeg, Brandon,
Assiniboia presbyteries

October 1-3
100th Anniversary
Knox, Weyburn, Saskatchewan

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Our Cover

Photos (L to R): Margaret Vanderzweerde presents a banner to the Chichanya Church in India (photo by Marjorie Ross); Mayan woman and children from partner communities in Guatemala (photo by Clare daSilva); children's youth band at Osaka Korean Church in Japan (photo by Marjorie Ross).

In the next issue ...

- The art of effective leadership: the second in our series on natural church growth
- Celebrating the Year of the Older Person:
 - Caring for our elders
 - The waiting years
- Why I make Sam go to church: an excerpt from Anne Lamott's recent book

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Mission takes centre stage as the church enters the new millennium

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Joseph C. McLelland

Women, trained in institutions like Ewart College, kept missionary fervour alive

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G. John Baergen

The first of nine articles, designed for small group study, to help congregations become healthy and effective

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Eddy Hall and Gary Morsch

How unbiblical beliefs about the laity cripple congregations

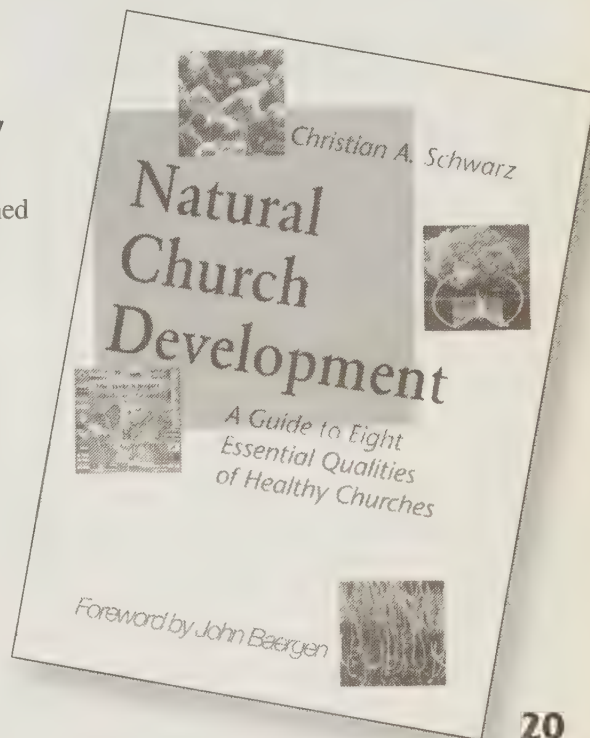
26 Thousands of Years in Thirty Hours

Gary Zacharias

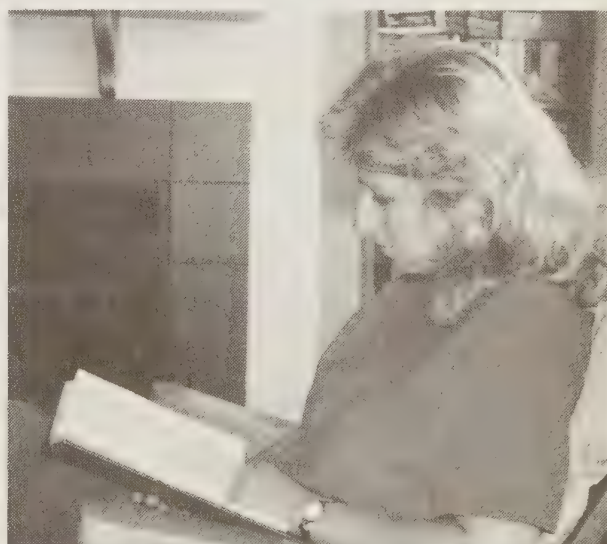
How you can make sense of the Bible



14



20



26

In Another's Skin

Kathy Cawsey notes, "It's difficult to think outside of our own heads" (Generation Y, *May Record*). However, in being unwilling to understand why her friend reacts as he does, she is as guilty as the (perhaps overly) racially aware friend of not being able to see the other point of view.

While I commend Kathy for her conviction in viewing everyone as equal, I also understand why her friend has divergent views and is suspicious of Kathy's naivety. Simply put, if you are not of another colour in our predominantly white society, you cannot be aware of what it is like. People of colour view the world differently, more often on the basis of race. No matter how "liberal" your thinking, you are unable to understand this point of view unless you experience it.

I am not a full woman of colour (half Guyanese-Indian) but, from an early age, I was aware of being different. To this day, when I meet people, I often assume they are judging me on my race, though I hear so often that no one notices. Last year, when I went to India with The Presbyterian Church in Canada, I felt much of the same judgment (whether imagined or true) from Indians. I constantly felt the Indians were looking at me with puzzlement — at the kind-of white, kind-of

Indian girl they could not classify.

I am not writing against Kathy's viewpoint; I, too, am a Gen-Xer who believes our voices, no matter how divergent, must be heard in this church. However, if we are to be truly reflective of the diversity within our church, we must "open our heads" to all points of view.

Catherine Inglis,
Toronto

Not a United Front

Where has Zander Dunn been for the past generation (*Vox Populi*, June *Record*)? Surely, he must be aware that most of the new members in the Presbyterian Church in the past 10 years are those who have been alienated from the United Church and have sought a more responsible Christian denomination. During the past generation, the United Church has been dominated by an extreme left-wing faction that has taken it in directions opposed by the majority of its members.

Let this letter be a small part of my case for opposing union with the United Church.

Keith A. Billet,
Bowmanville, Ont.

I read Zander Dunn's article with interest. As a former member of The United Church of Canada who left the church over theological differences, I am definitely opposed to any such talk of union. Do not expect support from many others who left that church to join The Presbyterian Church in Canada for the same

reasons! I respect The Presbyterian Church in Canada. I can count on the Scriptures being preached each Sunday. I am thankful to God for our ancestors who stuck to their beliefs in 1925 and remained Presbyterian.

Mary Jane Hanson,
Saskatoon

Zander Dunn's "case for uniting with the United Church" and his statement that "it would help

both churches open up to the Spirit of God" are disturbing. The United Church has lost many members since an apparently small group initiated liberalizing changes that depart from the biblical faith on which the church was founded.

To "open up" suggests bringing that pervasive influence — of detracting from biblical teachings, rampant within the leadership of the United Church — into

WATSON'S WORLD

NOEL WATSON



the Presbyterian Church. This would start a stampede away from what people like me thought we had left behind. Would that be progress in the faith?

*J. Alvin Speers,
Calgary*

Zander Dunn's proposal that we mark the new millennium by talking to our sisters and brothers in the United Church is exciting. If each Presbyterian congregation were to approach the closest United Church congregation in a spirit of reconciliation, the stories we could tell! Our celebration of the millennium would then be something to write about.

*Sandra R. Demson,
Toronto*

Genesis is Not Poetry

Contrary to Ted Sivers's suggestions (Word Alive, May Record), Genesis 1-2 recounts the history of God's creation of the world and its inhabitants according to the testimony of the only eyewitness of the events, God himself, who divinely inspired the writing of this passage of Scripture (II Timothy 3:16, II Peter 1:20-21). It is not presented as poetry (having none of the attributes of Hebrew poetry such as synonymous parallelism and anthropomorphism) or as myth but as a factual account of what happened. It has been so understood by virtually every Christian exegete throughout the ages.

It was not until the 19th century, when "science" (falsely so-called) claimed Genesis 1-2 was false, that we had the spectacle of pastors and ministers of the Word, most with little or no understanding of science, blithely avowing the Bible as the Word of God and yet fecklessly claiming Genesis 1-2 as poetry or myth. Never mind that virtually every tenet of Darwin's original theory has already been abandoned even by atheistic scientists. Never mind that the law of biogenesis, the second law of thermodynamics, information science and statistics all show that the theory of evolution is scientifically impossible. But those who choose to reject the Bible will continue to cling to the Darwinian myth.

Discard Genesis 1-2 and the rest of



PWS&D partner: the Institute for Development Education. Photo by: Margaret Vanderzweerde

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Scripture will surely follow. If we cannot trust what the Bible says about creation, how can we trust what it says about salvation?

I notice elsewhere in the *Record* that people are wondering why the Presbyterian Church is in decline. You need look no further than the cavalier dismissal of biblical truth to find the answer.

*John Tors,
Toronto*

Not Laughable

I was saddened to read Irvin Macklin's use of the word "laughable" when referring to the concept of buying back slaves in Sudan (Letters, June *Record*).

Most recent statistics reveal that the slave trade in Sudan declined last year. The reasons are numerous; yet, perhaps, the key factor has been the documentation provided to human rights groups by the freed slaves themselves. Their words have become strong and prophetic utterances to a world largely oblivious to their plight.

The practice of slave redemption was established through a joint peace accord between Dinkas and sympathetic Arabs in 1991. In sharing their plight with a broader world, they have not only seen

more of their loved ones released from the horrors of modern slavery but have endured long enough for their voices to be heard by numerous agencies.

The significant energies and resources Jane Roy and Elmwood Avenue Presbyterian Church have invested in Sudan should hardly be termed as laughable. The answer to slavery can only be a lasting peace; but, until the Sudanese government takes the negotiations seriously, the best hope for peace is for the world to hear of the Dinka plight. Through their respective governments, citizens and churches must pressure Sudanese leaders to realize that slavery is not acceptable in a world serious about human rights.

*Glen Pearson,
London, Ont.*

Jubilee and Debt Reduction

The debt petition I saw from the Justice Ministries was clear about the conditions petitioners were asking to be appended for the forgiving of the debt owed by foreign nations. The assumptions James Seidler makes (Letters, June *Record*) seem more in line with those of the World Bank or International Monetary Fund than with Leviticus 25.

God ordained the year of Jubilee for our good as well as for the good (or potential good) of those who benefit from debt forgiveness. It provides an opportunity to experience what it means to be gracious to others in a small way.

When Seidler states that indebted countries must be assisted to re-establish their credit rating to an acceptable level within the international financial community, I wonder to whose benefit? For the benefit of the debtor nations or for the benefit of those in the international financial community who would choose to attempt to "recapture the slaves"?

In the spirit of Leviticus 25, I believe Canada should forgive the debts of those who have become economic slaves. As followers of Jesus Christ, we injure ourselves spiritually when we do not follow the path provided for the common good. We should follow Leviticus 25 rather than get caught up in the legalism of the society in which we live or of the international financial community.

*Duncan Colquhoun,
Rodney, Ont.*

Understandably, pressure is building to relieve Third World countries of their massive debt to developed nations. However, I do not hear any discussion of what proportion of the debt is to be forgiven.

Are we to write off the monies wasted on ill-conceived and ill-managed development schemes that turn out to be white elephants? What of the vast sums embezzled or purloined by dictatorial heads of state? Do we ignore the bribes paid to corrupt officials or so-called aid monies tied to expenditure in donor countries? To forgive these debts is to condone dishonesty and malpractice.

Having worked for 16 years in rural Africa, I know what a disproportionately small amount of corporate aid monies has benefited local African communities. Before endorsing a call for debt forgiveness, we must think critically and carefully what debts should be discharged and where we should seek redress.

*R. M. Strang,
Surrey, B.C.*

Story of an Angel

I want to tell you about a special woman. Her name is J.J. Maroney. She is tall, with short brown hair and glasses. At first, people may think she is ordinary, but not when they get to know her. She's an angel.

She isn't only my angel or her family's angel, she's everyone's angel. She doesn't dress in white, have a halo, or go around doing good deeds all day. She listens when I speak and she understands. She gives us advice when we ask for it. She always has a hug for us — whether it's for a job well done, for good luck or simply to show she cares. When we are going through tough times, she is always there to comfort.

J.J. was sick a while ago. I overheard people saying she might die. I had never lost anyone close to me, so this came as a shock. I could only imagine how her family felt. It was the first time I was ever scared I would lose someone I loved. Before she got sick, J.J. had a beautiful voice; afterward, she could barely talk, let alone sing.

She sang at today's worship service. Her voice was not perfect. She couldn't sing the high parts, and the tune was a little off sometimes. But it was the most beautiful and meaningful song I've ever heard. It took a lot of self-control to keep the tears from streaming down my face.

J.J. has many titles: wife, mother, friend, musician, artist and church elder. She is also our heavenly angel on earth.

Melissa Clark (age 13), Dresden, Ont.

Not Clear to Everyone

I am bothered by Marty Hoogerdyk's comment (Letters, *May Record*). For him, Romans 1:18-32 is clear. However, biblical interpreter Walter Wink believes these verses were written concerning heterosexuals engaging in homosexual sex. Therefore, it is difficult to apply them to homosexuals living in a committed, loving relationship.

Scripture with regard to homosexuality needs to be interpreted prayerfully and thoughtfully. I encourage people to discuss this issue with the hope of reaching a greater understanding and openness.

Sarah Anderson,
Toronto

Support for the One Who Is Many

Words fail me to say how relieved I was to find an article in the *Record* written by

One of "those people" (Vox Populi, *May Record*). It took a long time for candidates in the recent Ontario election to include some concern in their rhetoric for the impoverished people living in Ontario.

Many women come out of marriages suffering from mental and physical abuse. The horrendous trend is that many are returning to those abusive situations because they cannot survive on the money allotted to them by welfare assistance.

In the aftermath of downsizing, many men and women have lost their jobs. The rhetoric stating that 540,000 new jobs have been created must be challenged. We need to ask such questions as where are these jobs? what kind of jobs are they? are they full-time or part-time? and what are the benefits?

Children are the most vulnerable in this debacle. They are affected by the cuts, the lack of money and parental

stress. Parents are faced with making decisions about whether to feed their children or pay the bills to keep a roof over their heads. It is difficult to sit in the same room with a Family and Children's Services worker who reports that parents have recently placed their child in care because they are financially unable to raise the child.

We are living in a time when each of us is only a divorce, a job loss, an accident, a death away from living on welfare. The church can no longer afford to dance around the issues of poverty only to avoid action. The health, safety and well-being of an entire province are dependent upon the efforts of concerned individuals. When Jesus said, "The poor you will have with you always," he did not mean it as an invitation to accept poverty.

Wanda Thompson,
Guelph, Ont.



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Who's Teaching Whom?

We took our dog to obedience class. He learned a few things. To stop. To sit. To walk at heel — well, at least as long as we still hold the other end of the leash. To stay — if he feels like it, for at least 30 seconds.

Most of his really valuable tricks, we taught him after the course ended. To bring his leash when he wants to go for a walk. To beg for table scraps. Begging is easy for short, stubby dogs, but it's quite an accomplishment for an Irish setter with a spine as long and flexible as well-boiled spaghetti.

He used to scratch at the door when he wanted to come in. With enormous self-discipline, we refused to open the door until he barked. Of course, as soon as he barked, we leaped to the door to let him in, just to make sure he didn't associate getting in with anything else.

So, naturally, every time he does those things, we reward him immediately. In fact, he now heads to the doggie-cookie drawer in the kitchen as soon as he comes in so that he can get his accustomed reward. And if he doesn't get it, he barks. Barks again. And again. Until we give him his treat.

We think we've done a good job of training him. But it occurs to me, occasionally, that may be a rather egotistical assessment. More likely, he's gotten us pretty well trained.

Of course, that's how things usually happen. We parents thought it was up to us to teach our children about the world. We passed on our values, our faith, our attitudes. And, yet, we know we all learned at least as much from our kids as they did from us. Sometimes, I joke that children are how parents grow up.

That's how things happen. In every human relationship. Whether those relationships are with our mentors or our minions, with those we consider superior or inferior — both of us are changed by the encounter.

Some years ago, I employed a young student fresh from his college course in editing and design — Tim Faller, currently the designer of this publication, the *Presbyterian Record*. Until then, I had been editing pretty much on my own. Tim had no intention of changing things. He didn't come in with an agenda to impose. But, inevitably, just by being there, he affected our operations.

Which leads me to a possibly heretical question. What makes God different?

We talk about God as almighty, all-knowing. We refer to ourselves as God's children. It's a comfortable description. For us. Because it frees us from responsibility. If God knows everything, and we know nothing by comparison, then we're unimportant. Irrelevant. We're just children. Pawns in the divine plan.

But if our relationship with God is anything like our relationship with other humans — indeed, with all creation — then, maybe, we teach God as well as God teaching us. Unnerving concept, that God is capable of learning.

Jesus learned. He learned to talk, to walk, to argue with adults. He thought, for a while, that he was sent only to the Israelites. He tried to brush off a Gentile woman who wanted help for her daughter. He called her a "dog at the table." But she persisted. And he changed his mind. He suddenly saw himself as having a mission also to the Gentiles.

If Jesus is — as the Christian faith professes — the living revelation of the

divine God, then, maybe, God can change too. Maybe God can learn.

That's what a group who call themselves "process theologians" say. They see God's creation evolving. They suggest God is also evolving. Growing. And that we have a part in that. When we die, we don't drift off individually to some permanent paradise of palm trees and babbling brooks. Rather, we are absorbed — lock, stock and life full of experiences — into our God. And that, they say, is how God learns.

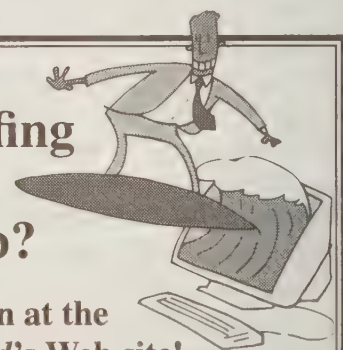
If they are right, if, somehow, God does learn and grow through our experiences, it puts a powerful responsibility on us. To live the kind of lives that will enhance — not demean — the God of the universe.

Each of us will, of course, be only an infinitesimally small portion of the totality that is God. But we will have an effect.

Which means, I believe, that we need to take care of ourselves. We need to seek out for ourselves those experiences that will allow God to become more God-like. **■**

Jim Taylor is a writer, editor and co-founder of Wood Lake Books.

Surfing the Web?



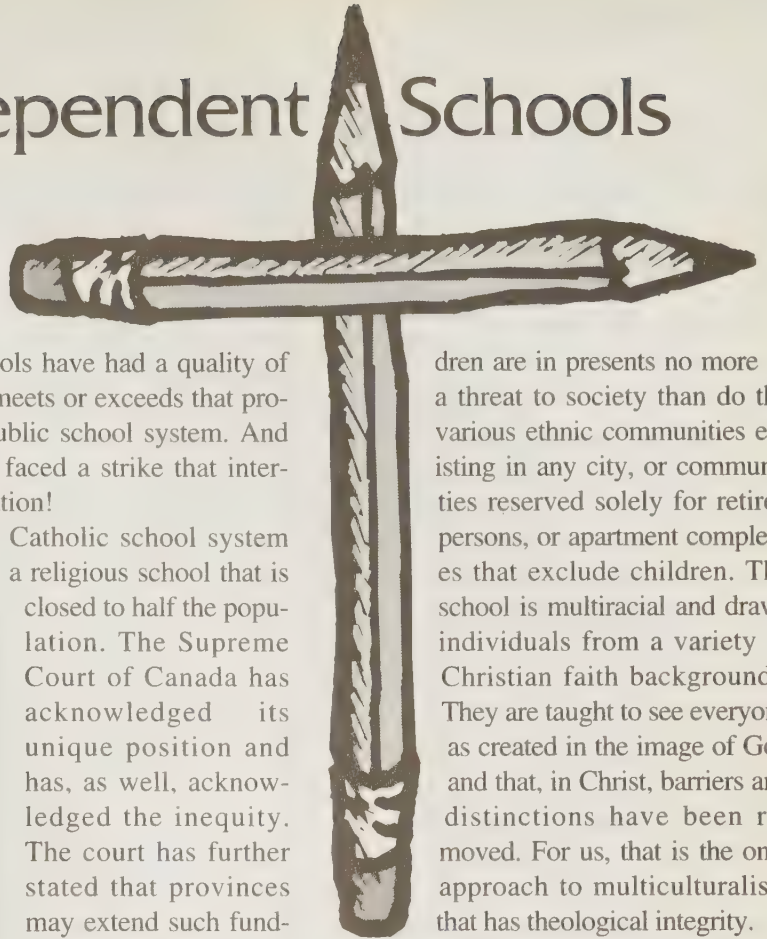
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Why I Support Independent Schools

Ron VanAuken



In the January '99 *Record*, Presbyterian Forum asked the question, "Should Presbyterians support government-funded religious schools?" Most respondents were against this. I have children in both public and independent schools. Here are some of the convictions behind our choice of an independent school.

As parents, we believe the responsibility for educating and nurturing our children belongs first and foremost to parents, not to the government. This is a theological conviction.

Parents who seek to educate their children in independent Christian schools are not asking for government money. We are seeking the freedom to use our tax dollars, which the government has exacted from us, to support the school or schools of our choice.

The Christian faith cannot be reduced to values or to a subject that stands alongside other subjects. It comes, particularly for those of us who stand in the Reformed tradition, with a particular and unique world-view that permeates all of life and learning.

While we are called to be "salt, light and leaven," we are aware that children are in the formative years of their lives and that school represents a significant influence on them. It is more and more difficult for some parents to accept an educational system that rejects and, many times, provides an affront to what is first and foremost in our lives and what we wish to be foremost in the lives of our children: our relationship to God.

Our children who have been in the in-

dependent schools have had a quality of education that meets or exceeds that provided by the public school system. And we have never faced a strike that interrupts that education!

The Roman Catholic school system has been and is a religious school that is closed to half the population. The Supreme Court of Canada has acknowledged its unique position and has, as well, acknowledged the inequity. The court has further stated that provinces may extend such funding to other groups, should they so desire.

The majority of independent schools provide a level of accountability that does not exist in the public system. Our own school is directly accountable to parents. Board members are chosen from among the parents. Two membership meetings are held each year at which parents have a direct voice into virtually all matters concerning the school and the education of their children. The parents have never had to choose sides between the interests of teachers, school board, children and government as we have had to do with our publicly educated children, particularly over the past three years.

We are able, with trust and confidence, to see the school as an extension of the home and a supporter of the faith, social and intellectual development of our children. We cannot say this of our children who are in the public system.

While we are not able to speak for all schools everywhere, the school our chil-

dren are in presents no more of a threat to society than do the various ethnic communities existing in any city, or communities reserved solely for retired persons, or apartment complexes that exclude children. The school is multiracial and draws individuals from a variety of Christian faith backgrounds. They are taught to see everyone as created in the image of God and that, in Christ, barriers and distinctions have been removed. For us, that is the only approach to multiculturalism that has theological integrity.

In the school our youngest boys attend, there are children of at least three public school teachers, one a principal; none come from a denomination with a history of supporting independent schools. Some time ago, Lyle Schaller pointed out that, of all the professions, those most likely to send their children to an independent school are public school teachers.

In the end, it comes to simply a matter of parental responsibility and choice. Some favour no choice and prefer to believe one size should fit all. Others believe they are responsible to God for the upbringing, nurture and education of his covenant children and they seek the freedom to do so by using their own tax dollars. The argument that it will mean the destruction of education is pure folly, perhaps even scaremongering. It is the equivalent to the arguments put forth by those who opposed the equal rights amendment in the United States when they suggested it would mean unisex washrooms for everyone. **R**

Ron VanAuken is the minister of Celebration! Church in Whitby, Ont.



The Jealousy of Kings & Commoners

1 Samuel 18

I suppose Saul began by genuinely liking David and wishing him well. Most of us want to see our acquaintances, co-workers, relatives, neighbours and young friends do well — though not too well. Give Saul credit, he was an early supporter of David and recognized David's great skill and ability. Still, there is something about us that likes to see success in others as long as it doesn't exceed certain limits we set. Jealousy is like rust: it starts in a small way, then proceeds to eat away the structure until, one day, it consumes the whole body.

Let us agree, David was less than perfect. The problem is that people who are smart know they are smart; if humility is not constantly exercised, they develop a severe ego problem. Other flaws would also emerge in David's character — the best known having to do with an excess of interest in a beauty named Bathsheba. Still, for reasons that escape us, God's love for David was greater than David's sin. That gives us hope too! Whatever else David was, he was always a man of God and, at least for God, that made the difference.

For many years, David's history revolved around King Saul. As a young

shepherd, David was secretly anointed king-in-waiting to replace Saul one day. There are two versions of how Saul noticed David. The first is that Saul often had the blues and hired David and his harp to sing away his sadness. The second is that the Philistines offered to settle a battle with one man from each side fighting until only one remained. The Philistines were represented by their star line-backer, Goliath, while young David stepped forward with his slingshot on the Hebrew side.

The text relates how the local women sang sweetly about David's courage and exploits to the jealous dismay of King Saul. It is like a minister returning from vacation to the praise of the guest minister who did everything better than the incumbent. It is like hearing that your neighbour's daughter is prettier and smarter than your daughter and, therefore, sure to get the only available position on the cheerleading team. That has been enough to drive a parent to plot murder!

So jealously tortured was Saul that David not only had to worry about the Philistines but also had to look over his shoulder at Saul. Instead of disappearing, however, David became Saul's son-in-law by marrying Michal. He also became best friends with Jonathan, Saul's heir apparent. Add to this, he became more and more popular with the people. Twice, Saul tried to pin David with his spear. He also sent David into battle with the Philistines so David might be killed. This was a trick David later used to his apparent advantage when he wanted to make Bathsheba a widow and, therefore, officially "available."

Forced, finally, to flee, David gathered a rag-tag army of brigands, bandits, malcontents and desperadoes. Living by his wits, he convinced the Philistines he was mad so that he could travel safely. While David feigned madness, Saul moved deeper and deeper into real madness — a jealous rage.

For seven years, David played a cat-and-mouse game as Saul became more and more desperate to get him. Twice, David could have killed Saul and, twice, he turned away as an act of kindness and faith. In a major battle with Saul, the

Philistines decided not to trust David in battle against his own people and kept him out of it. Just as well for David.

David is justly famous for making one nation of many tribes, for his musical ability and for the gathering of several historical and poetic books. David sometimes had feet of clay but, when the road was difficult, he remembered to be a man of God. Jealous? Rarely. Magnanimous, almost always. We have come to admire David not for what he wasn't, but for what he was. **R**

L. E. (Ted) Siverns is the minister of First Church in New Westminster, B.C.

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**We have come
to admire
David not for
what he wasn't
but for
what he was**

For Discussion and Reflection

- List the strengths and weaknesses of David's character. How does he measure up in your eyes?
- How do your own strengths and weaknesses add up?
- Is David overrated, underrated or treated right by history?
- Can you admire yourself and others for what you/they are rather than condemn them for what they are not?

My dear editor:

Little Angus Black and Jimmy Reid have been thrilled at the response to the survey they worked on with CROP (Canadians Researching Ongoing Presbyterianism) reported in the June *Record*. Even excluding the letters from the mothers and relatives of all concerned, few of these pastoral epistles have elicited such response from your readers. We have answered two of the letters and are working on the third. We have modestly acknowledged the many expressions of gratitude verbally conveyed, and like to think we did our part in making the past Assembly as tranquil as it was and in bringing peace to Kosovo. Our very own Angus-Reid and CROP pollsters will use the *Record's* consistently fine reportage from General Assemblies to formulate questions for future surveys.

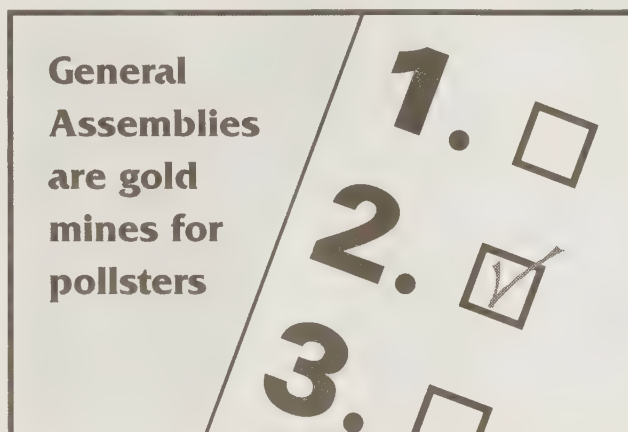
Noting your astute observation in *For the Record* — "Like no other issues, money and sex seem to excite commissioners at General Assembly. This year, it was money's turn" — we intend to monitor the eagerness of potential commissioners and which year they prefer.

Curious about the outgoing Moderator's optimism — "Moderator sees bright future for the church" — and inspired by some of the veteran Assembly-goers of our acquaintance, we are going to look back over the years and discover how many Moderators had a dim view of where we were headed. "He compared our present situation to that of Joshua and the children of Israel approaching the Promised Land. Both are asked to go where they have not gone before."

The future is like that, isn't it? It has a tendency to be unknown until we get there; then, it's the present, and we have to start all over again. So we are interpreting the statement as a plea for more trumpet players (though some felt it was a cross-disciplinary reference to *Star Trek*) and, maybe, at least on an alternate-year Assembly, for a new mission to fallen women like Rahab. The polls will tell if we are correct.

The item dealing with the Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Korea ad-

ressing the Assembly and reporting that his church was "strongly favouring unity" and was advocating "work for reconciliation and peace between the two Koreas" was interesting. Especially as it ran in a column adjacent to a picture of the principal of Knox College welcoming the new principal of The Presbyterian College. Coincidence? We will see what the people think.



It appears the denomination is once again exercised about video lottery terminals, "dice games and betting on cruise ships" and gambling in general. The new Moderator (who, from your Assembly report, will be spending much of his moderatorial year writing urging letters to the government) is to urge the establishment of a federal task force "to assess the social, ethical, legal and economic impact of the expansion in gambling."

Just if and how we should poll the people on this subject was a matter of consternation and division here at Plymley Pyrotechnics. Angus bet Jimmy ten bucks that it would be five years before such a task force completed its work, and too late. Some wondered if we should offer to pay for the task force from the budget surplus. Others thought we could get a good response if we mailed our questionnaires in envelopes with "YOU MAY ALREADY HAVE WON!!!" printed on them in red letters. (The prize would be a new *Book of Praise*, but that would be mentioned in small print on the bottom of the questionnaire itself.) We intend to solve the divisiveness in biblical fashion by drawing lots (Acts 1:26).

The Moderator gets a slight change of pace by being asked to write "a letter of concern" to the powers, whomever they be, at CBC-TV regarding the decision to cancel *Hymn Sing* and *Meeting Place*. (This time, he will "urge" sessions to do the same.) We can really help here. We will poll the people to find out if, with the aid of study guides from church offices such as "The Theology of Rev.

Lovejoy" and/or "Frasier Crane — He's Listening," *The Simpsons* and *Frasier*, respectively, might be adequate replacements. After all, they are popular American shows and are, therefore, available *anywhere* in Canada.

The awkward business of the Westminster Confession of Faith and its reference to the Pope as the

"Antichrist" did *not* result in the Moderator being asked to write urging His Holiness to cease and desist. We propose a question to help the Church Doctrine Committee decide what to do: "Do you think the Antichrist is 1. The Pope, 2. Jerry Springer, 3. Svend Robinson?" If he *had* been asked to write, the Moderator wouldn't have been able to do it in the language of the Vatican (and of the church and courts for centuries): Latin.

In response to urgings from the clerks of Assembly, Latin terms will be removed from the Book of Forms. The people will be asked if they prefer 1. English, 2. English as long as it isn't translated by the compilers of the new *Book of Praise*, 3. Gaelic, 4. or if the whole idea isn't further evidence of the umblingday ownaday of the church.

Enough for now, but Assemblies *are* gold mines for pollsters. This vein isn't exhausted.

Yours appreciatively,

Peter Plymley II



Photo: Marjorie Ross

Canada Ministries and Youth in Mission have planned a youth work camp on a First Nations reserve.

Fanning the

by Tom Dickey

Now that the FLAMES initiative is heating up, the *Record* thought it a good time to draw closer to the fire. Beginning with this issue, and continuing in the September issue for the next five years, we will present an overview of one of the six themes making up the FLAMES acronym. The featured letter for June 1999 to June 2000 is "M" — "M" as in Mission: National, International and Justice.

Since mission begins at home, we'll start with **Canada Ministries**. And what a big home it is! Not only does it include congregations in cities, towns and villages, but in more remote areas as well. Canada Ministries is planning an exposure tour in May 2000 to highlight some remote ministries in the Peace River district of Alberta and in British Columbia. Promotional material should be available later this month.

In another project, young people will have an opportunity to atone for the sins of previous generations at a work camp on a First Nations reserve. The camp is being planned in partnership with **Youth in Mission** and will take place next summer.

If mission tours a little farther afield are more your cup of cappuccino, **International Ministries** has nine trips planned: Costa Rica and Nicaragua, Eastern Europe, Guatemala and El Salvador, the Holy Land, India and Nepal, India, Japan and Taiwan, Kenya and Malawi, and Malawi and Mozambique. The tours will take place in the spring and fall of 2000 (except for the trip to Costa Rica and Nicaragua that takes place in spring 2001) and will be led by Presbyterian

mission staff. Information brochures are available from International Ministries.

Those who take part in the mission tours will return home with vivid memories. International Ministries hopes to return the favour by presenting its overseas partners with vivid banners made by Canadian congregations. The goal is to collect 125 banners — one for each year of The Presbyterian Church in Canada's history — and distribute them among overseas churches as symbols of love and shared faith. Details on the banner-making can also be obtained from International Ministries.

For outreach ministry to be effective, we must be prepared to put our money where our mission is. That's often where **Presbyterian World Service and Development** comes in. PWS&D will continue to lead the church in emergency relief — whether it is a famine in North Korea or an ice storm in Canada. The agency will also continue its active role in the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, helping to collect and direct food aid to wherever it is needed. A particularly timely mission of PWS&D, in light of the tragedy in Kosovo, is to administer refugee sponsorships for The Presbyterian Church in Canada. To ensure it stays on the cutting edge of mission, PWS&D will remain active within ecumenical and developmental coalitions.

As always, PWS&D will maintain its leading role in working with congregations and overseas partners in education, health, development and income generation.

Yet, there can be little development without justice (and little justice without development). Earlier this year, **Justice**



International Ministries has nine mission tours planned.



Photo: Marjorie Ross

International Ministries hopes to distribute 125 Canadian-made banners to overseas partners.

FLAMES of ... MISSION

Ministries collected 7,230 signatures on a petition calling on the developed world to forgive the debts owed by impoverished countries. Those signatures became part of 615,000 collected across Canada. Justice Ministries will continue to promote the Canadian Ecumenical Jubilee Initiative and will consider ways churches can encourage a more equitable sharing of the world's wealth.

Closer to home, the agency will work with presbyteries and congregations to develop responses to what has, in recent years, become a major concern — the quality of health care in their communities. In fact, working closely with presbyteries and congregations is a big part of the Justice Ministries' *modus operandi*. To that end, it will continue to share information and ideas through the publication of a newsletter.

Of course, mission involves the sharing of more than information; it involves the sharing of God's word. **Evangelism and Church Growth** is studying new ways churches are evangelizing and how they are growing in response. New resource material is being developed to help congregations understand the role of evangelism in the church's mission.

Waiting for church growth to happen without involving children and youth is a bit like listening for the sound of one hand clapping. **Ministry with Children and Youth**, through **Youth in Mission** (and in partnership with other Life and Mission agencies), has planned a number of activities to ensure the involvement of youth. These include hands-on mission experiences in Hungary, Nicaragua and on a First Nations reserve, as well as a "learning/sharing" study on Cuba. A trip

to Malawi has already been completed. [See News section of this issue.]

Ministry with Children and Youth is also heavily involved with planning for Canada Youth 2000, taking place July 4-9, 2000, at Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario.

If mission is to remain on track, there must be something to stoke the engine. **Stewardship/Presbyterians Sharing...** points out that contributions to *Presbyterians Sharing...* were up one per cent from the previous year. The average household gives \$1.62 per week. If that amount were increased by four cents, the budget would be met and the church could accomplish more ministry.

An innovative conference called "Stewards by Design," designed to assist congregations in developing a vision for mission, was held in April. Its success has led to a call for more stewardship conferences.

Finally, for mission to be conducted in an intelligent way, there must be **Education for Mission**. New resources include: *Mission Possible*, a group process to prepare for a mission experience; *Before I Leave*, personal reflections and study to prepare for a mission experience; and *A Covenant of Partnership*, a book on the ministry and work of the churches in Cuba. In addition, *Something Extra* will have even more "extra" in it to help congregations participate in special mission projects.

[Editor's note: Many details were yet to be ironed out when this article was written. For more information, contact the Life and Mission Agency at 1-800-619-7301.] **B**



Photo: CIVEMN

PWS&D will continue to lead the church in emergency relief.

Sharing God's Mission Together

A Study of the
Covenant of Partnership
between
The Presbyterian Church in Canada
and the
Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba

by L. June Stevenson

Education for Mission has produced a number of new resources relating to mission.



Photo: Guy Smaghe

Something Extra can help congregations participate in special mission projects.



COMING EVENTS AT KNOX COLLEGE

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1 9:00 - 3:30

Speaking of Faithfulness ...

(How) Do We Practise What We Preach?

A workshop with Nancy Cocks, Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology at the Vancouver School of Theology, on interpreting the life-stories of people and places using recent resources in narrative theory.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 20 2:00 - 5:00
MCDONALD LECTURE

Underneath Are the Everlasting Arms: Essentials of Pastoral Care in the Midst of Personal Crisis.

A paper written by Rev. Chris Vais and presented by a colleague. Chris, the minister of Waterdown Presbyterian Church for 11 years, was diagnosed with ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease). Rather than despairing in the face of debilitating illness, Chris has experienced an ever-deepening sense of God's grace and presence.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 10 2:00 & 8:00

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 11 4:00

LIDLAW LECTURES

In the End, Love

A series of lectures by Miroslav Volf, the Henry B. Wright Professor of Theology at Yale Divinity School (formerly of Fuller Theological Seminary). His lectures will aim to inspire hope by situating the present between memory of God's action in the past and anticipation of God's ultimate future.

The workshop and lectures are held at Knox College and are free to all who wish to attend.

In order to determine numbers for the workshop only, please pre-register by calling (416) 978-0139.

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Holy Land — Leader: Marjorie Ross

Eastern Europe — Leaders: Brian Johnston, David Pandy-Szekeres

FALL 2000

India — Leaders: Pauline Brown, Clarence McMullen

Guatemala/El Salvador — Leaders: Ken & Kennis Kim

Jim & Brenda Patterson

Mozambique/Malawi — Leaders: Mark Gordon, Rick Fee, Linda Inglis

SPRING 2001

India/Nepal — Leader: Margaret Vanderzweerde

Costa Rica/Nicaragua — Leader: Joe Reed

(originally planned for fall 1999)

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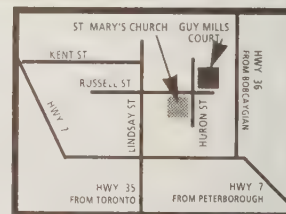
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Post-script:

Women ... and Mission?

by Joseph C. McLelland

The Angel Factory," it was affectionately called: Ewart College. I recall it now because my last column described the Knox College class of '49. At our reunion luncheon in the grand old college dining hall in May, we sat with "others" who also graduated that year — the women of Ewart. Now recognized as the Knox-Ewart Class of '49, they remember the days before 1966 when women were not yet being ordained. What women did in the church was a sort of postscript to male ministry and eldership. The fact that the Women's Missionary Society, East and West, maintained strong leadership in home and overseas missions suggests that mission was also considered a kind of postscript, rather ec-centric.

The Missionary and Deaconess Training School graduated generations of women who laboured at home and overseas in the cause of mission and Christian education. It was a 1907 overture that called our church "to set apart an order of

women who shall be known as deaconesses, who shall serve the church as nurses, visitors, dispensers of charity and in any other way that proves to be desirable." They were truly "missionaries." So were their counterparts overseas, where

The heritage of Ewart College that stresses education and mission remains a necessity for the church in an age of scepticism

their variety of skills served a variety of needs. The Book of Forms ordered these orderly women to procure a distinctive uniform, unfortunately not described.

An example was the mining towns of northern Quebec. When I arrived at Val d'Or and Perron in 1949, I discovered communities of faith founded by pioneer

missionary Donald MacLeod and nurtured by faithful deaconesses, notably Lily Macarthur and others who assisted or carried on alone. The mixture of races and creeds they served remembered their compassion and exemplary witness. The same story was told wherever we went across our church as students and young ministers — deaconesses paved the way or maintained small parishes year after year.

Today, the heritage of Ewart College stresses the dimension of Christian education, more than ever a necessity for the church in a time of credulity; that is, scepticism about "God" in favour of belief in anything vaguely transcendent. Let's hope the Ewart heritage now within Knox College will encourage the formation of our ministers as "teaching elders." Yet, the missionary flavour remains firm, for education is surely a means of mission, the learning of Christian truth and the way of discipleship. Today, the very term *mission* is suspect,





Guideposts

Celebrating Our Heritage



Photo courtesy Archives of The United Church of Canada

The opening of a new church in Rossland, B.C., August 25 or 26, 1895.
(From right to left): Rev. James Robertson (missions superintendent),
Rev. Hugh J. Robertson, Rev. Charles Gordon (Ralph Connor).

In 1881, over the objections of some who felt the appointment smacked of episcopacy, James Robertson was appointed the first superintendent of western missions. Under his administrative skills and enthusiasm, Presbyterianism grew to become the largest denomination in the West. Part of his success lay in recruiting robust, young men as missionaries. He once remarked to his wife, "I would rather have a man know less Latin and more horse."

When he died in 1902, Western Canada had two synods, 18 presbyteries and 258 mission fields. Two superintendents were appointed to succeed him.

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Briefly noted

Departures: **Makram and Mona Barsoum** for Cyprus, Sept. 1.

Arrivals: **Joy Randall** from Taiwan, Sept. 1; **Dr. Rick Allen** and visitor **Rev. Joseph Mothaly** from Kenya, Sept. 28.

Deaths: **Lois Powrie**, 71, retired diaconal minister and former children's and youth secretary for the WMS, July 21, in Mount Forest, Ont.; **Gordon Towers**, 79, former lieutenant-governor of Alberta (1991-96), elder at Zion Church, Willowdale, Alta., for over 40 years.

with "pure" missionaries denied access to many countries whose native religions no longer brook any rival. Not that Christian mission was ever an ivory tower affair — think of Livingstone's explorations, Mother Teresa's compassion, or our own George Leslie Mackay pulling all those teeth in Formosa!

Perhaps, Christian mission in this age of denial must become what sociologist Peter Berger calls the "heretical imperative." That is, now that Christianity is no longer seen as having a monopoly on truth and morality, we find ourselves a minority — which may be a great good that has befallen us. Now we can parade our peculiar *choice* — which is what "heresy" means. Our choice of what is true and good is heretical because it goes against the spirit of our age, the majority opinion. If mission be heresy, then Christians, too, are in the tradition of alienation, persecution, exile and martyrdom endured by minority voices down the centuries.

Canada's first missionaries were monks and priests. Most famous is probably Jean de Brébeuf among the Hurons. We find his beautiful carol "Jesous Ahatonhia" in our *Book of Praise*. Canadian poet E. J. Pratt has an epic poem (*Brébeuf and His Brethren*) about the valour of this Jesuit under torture by the Iroquois. He asks, "Where was the source of his strength, the home of his courage?" In his physical strength, the shoulders and thighs renowned for carrying canoes and burdens on portage? in his blood, or heart? in Loyola's discipline or Richelieu's robes?

*... not in these was the valour or stamina
lodged ...*

*But in the sound of invisible trumpets
blowing*

*around two slabs of board, right-angled,
hammered*

by Roman nails and hung on a Jewish hill.

That's witness, the same old vocation facing the same old rejection by the orthodoxies of every age (including today's "political correctness"?). That's still what *mission* means, whether in poetry or in prose, in metaphor or in fact. **R**

Joseph C. McLelland is emeritus professor of McGill University and The Presbyterian College, Montreal, and a contributing editor of this magazine.



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Pour s' enrôler dans la Force régulière durant l'été 2000, il faut prendre contact avec le bureau de l'aumônier général avant le 15 octobre 1999.

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Your Church Can Grow

by G. John Baergen

What a time to be alive! Today, on the threshold of a new millennium, we face growing opportunities to demonstrate a faith that makes a difference at the core of life. Never before in our lifetime have we been equipped with so many new tools and new perspectives on church leadership. Never before have we faced so many challenges that present opportunities to impact our world for Jesus Christ. Therefore, the future of the Church in the new millennium is bright.

There is a shift happening — from the church growth thinking of the '70s, '80s and early '90s to the present focus on church health. This fresh perspective reminds us the Church is an organism rather than an organization — dynamic and pulsating, flourishing naturally when in good health.

Join us as we embark on a journey toward a practical understanding of church health drawn from the book *Natural Church Development* (The International Centre for Leadership Development and Evangelism, 1998). In his book, author and researcher Christian Schwarz emphatically states church growth is a natural or "biotic" result of church health. Schwarz says this is a Natural Church Development (NCD) principle.

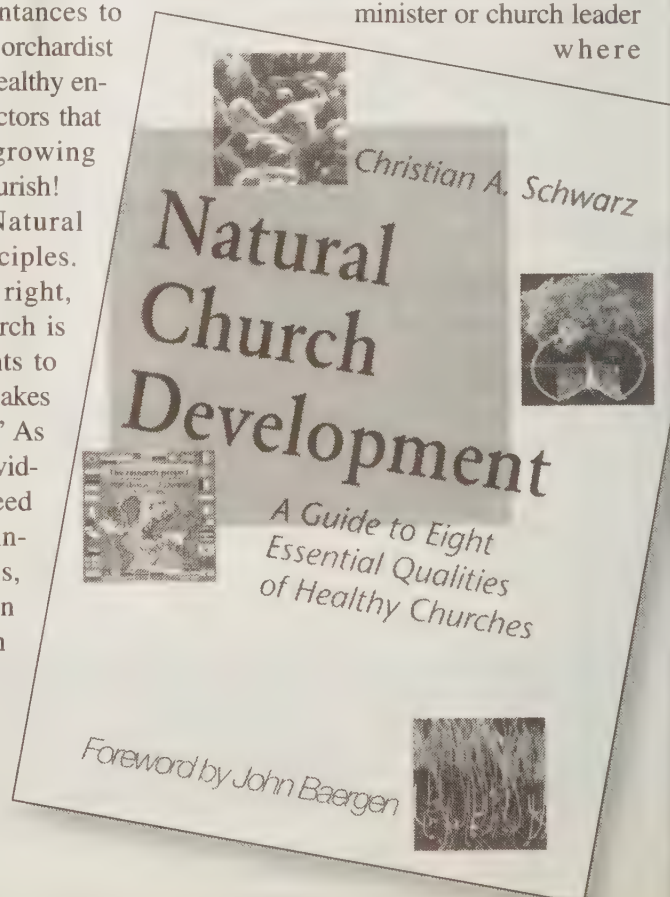
My family and I are privileged to live surrounded by apple trees on land in British Columbia's Okanagan Valley. In our first years of ownership, we harvest-

This is the first of nine articles on how you can help make your congregation more healthy and effective

ed an abundance of tiny, juice-quality apples. We did not understand the steps necessary to produce those large specimens we saw at the store. Both quantity and quality were important to us. So we rented our trees to an expert, an orchardist. Under his care, those same trees are now producing an abundance of large, high-grade apples. Because of his understanding and ability, we proudly invite friends, family and acquaintances to pick and enjoy our fruit. The orchardist understood how to create a healthy environment. Removing the factors that prevent the apples from growing larger allowed the crop to flourish!

This is a picture of Natural Church Development principles. When the environment is right, when the health of the Church is good, when the impediments to growth are removed, God makes growth happen "all by itself." As Schwarz says, "God has provided everything we'll ever need for church growth." Yet, "instead of using God's means, we try to do things in our own strength — with much pulling and pushing. The goal is to let God's growth automatism flourish instead of wasting energy on human-made programs." This is the "all by itself" principle at work in the Church.


So, what does church health look like? Schwarz identifies eight quality characteristics of church health common to all churches polled world-wide. His research included 4.2 million responses from more than 1,000 churches in 32 countries on all six continents. These eight characteristics provide a snapshot of the qualities found in churches demonstrating varying degrees of health. Schwarz and his research team then went a step further and developed a measurement tool that would identify what he terms the "minimum factor," or the area of greatest need. This clarifies for the minister or church leader where



the immediate focus should lie. For the minister, this is hope for the future.

But the challenge before us remains. The majority of Canadian churches are still either plateaued or declining numerically. The work seems difficult, slow-moving, tedious and frustrating. Why, when all we need to do is allow God to grow a church?

Be encouraged, there are growing islands of church health crossing over denominational lines and across our nation from Vancouver Island to the Maritimes. These churches have experienced change. Increasingly, they have grasped the fact that ministry must be packaged with the aroma of Jesus — winsome, inviting, authentic — wrapped in an atmosphere of prayer. Increasingly, those in leadership seek God's work in their personal lives. They understand "God has provided everything we'll need for church growth." In growing numbers, leaders within these churches seek to do ministry with God's heart, embracing God's wisdom with the power of the Holy Spirit.

In the next eight articles, we will begin to explore the essential characteristics of church health from two perspectives: first, from the research of Christian Schwarz and, secondly, from what is actually taking place in a growing number of local churches across Canada and around the world. We trust this will be personally and spiritually challenging, providing you with increased confidence in the Church. 

John Baergen is executive director and chief executive officer of The International Centre for Leadership Development and Evangelism in Winfield, B.C.; 1-800-804-0777.

For more information on church health, visit the evangelism Web site: www.presbyterian.ca/evangelism.

*The Church is
an organism
rather than
an organization —
dynamic and pulsating,
flourishing naturally
when in good health*

For Discussion and Reflection

by Jim Czegledi

John Baergen notes a change of focus in church growth circles. The emphasis has shifted from church growth to growing healthy churches. Healthy congregations deal with problems effectively instead of helplessly allowing them to escalate. They resolve conflict, deal with difficult people and issues, and identify personal and hidden agendas. Healthy congregations hold people accountable and responsible. They are purpose-driven churches with a clear focus. They are not, however, churches without troubles.

Churches become healthier by approaching problems from the perspective of the whole system. In the past, emphasis was on how individuals acted within the congregation. Thinking has now switched to a systems approach.

The New Testament compares the Church to a living system similar to the human body. The Church, as the Body

of Christ, is comprised of many parts but functions as one organism. Various members and systems of the Church relate as its cells and organs.


The systems approach considers the interrelatedness of individuals and looks at the whole instead of at unrelated parts. No person or event is an island in systems thinking. Everything stands in relationship with and affects the other parts.

As we begin this series on how to grow a healthy congregation, gather a small group together to discuss the article each month. Or use it with your session or other already established group. Each month, I will comment on John Baergen's article from the perspective of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and will also include a study guide for your group.

A couple of additional books you might consider for supplemental read-

ing are *Healthy Congregations* by Pete Steinke (Alban Institute, 1996) and *The Purpose Driven Church* by Rick Warren (Zondervan, 1995). These authors also believe growth is natural in a healthy congregation.

Here are some preliminary questions for you to consider:

- What is the purpose of your congregation? Does your congregation have a mission or vision statement?
- What aspects of this statement are relevant and what parts need revision?
- Who are the people your congregation is trying to reach?
- What aspects of your congregation need change for it to become a healthy congregation? 

Jim Czegledi is associate secretary for evangelism, church growth and worship of the Life and Mission Agency of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

The Lay Ministry Revolution

by Eddy Hall and Gary Morsch

In the 1950s, Elton Trueblood wrote: "If the average church should suddenly take seriously the notion that every laymember — man or woman — is really a minister of Christ, we could have something like a revolution in a very short time." Today, a growing number of churches are experiencing this revolution. But in most churches, most members still don't see themselves as ministers. As a result, church staff are overburdened while many members feel sidelined.

What is keeping Trueblood's revolution from sweeping through all our churches? For centuries, the church has divided Christians into two distinct groups — the ministers (clergy) and those ministered to (laity). This division has been maintained by four *ministry myths* — unbiblical beliefs about ministry that have shaped how most Christians approach ministry. Before the revolution can come to your church, these four ministry myths must be exposed and corrected.

MYTH #1: Ministry is only for "ministers"

God calls certain people to church leadership, and their role is essential. But, in describing the call of leaders, Scripture does not single them out as the "ministers." Rather, it emphasizes the ministry of all believers: "The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry" (Ephesians 4:11-12, NRSV, emphasis added).

Our friend Mark knew all Christians were called to minister, but he bought into the version of this myth that says

God can *best* use those in professional ministry. Wanting God's best, he quit his job, went to seminary, then joined a church staff.

In his new job, Mark quickly discovered his gift was not administration. "I'm most effective in one-on-one ministry," he explains. "And rather than coordinating existing ministries, I'd rather

Exposing unbiblical beliefs that may be crippling the ministry of your congregation

be bringing new people in. I thought joining a church staff would give me more freedom but, in reality, it limited how much time I could spend doing what I do best." Even though he knew some people would think he was settling for "God's second best," Mark resigned from the church staff and went into insurance.

"Though I didn't realize it when I started," Mark says, "insurance is a perfect job for someone who wants to work with hurting people. Whenever a client loses a spouse, I get a phone call. When any of my clients divorce, they come to me to change their insurance papers. And whenever one of them has a car accident, a fire, or a serious illness covered by insurance, the client comes to see me. A few weeks ago, I told my wife I've never before felt God using me in ministry as I have lately."

Only when Mark understood that God could use him more effectively in the business world than on church staff was God able to put Mark's ministry gifts to fullest use.

MYTH #2: Ministry refers only to meeting spiritual needs

When I (Eddy) was in college, I would sometimes go to a park on Sunday afternoons with a few friends and we would approach strangers with *The Four Spiritual Laws*, a booklet that explains how to become a Christian. A half-dozen or so people I talked to prayed the sinner's prayer. One even came to church for a few months.

In time, however, I grew uneasy with this cold-turkey witnessing. For one thing, I saw little evidence it was leading to changed lives. But part of my discomfort, I believe, grew out of my own changing relationship with God. Nurtured by my pastor's sermons, I was seeing God less as a stern judge and more as a loving father. I was beginning to realize God is not only concerned about my getting to heaven, God also cares about my joys and pains, my hopes and fears. God doesn't care only about my soul; he cares about me.

The more I experienced God's love, the clearer it became I was not treating people in the park the way God treats me. I was treating them as objects — as trophies to be won, not as people to be loved.

Somehow, I had the idea ministry involved meeting only — or, at least, primarily — spiritual needs. Witnessing, preaching, Bible teaching, leading worship — this was ministry. But feeding the hungry? Visiting the sick? They were nice things to do, I would have said, but hardly ministry.

But as love replaced law as my motivation for ministry, I started seeing people through new eyes. I became less concerned with persuading others to do

the right thing and more interested in helping them. Ministry, I realized, had to be concerned not only with spiritual needs but also with the needs of the whole person. Love is not limited to caring about one kind of need.

When people believe ministry is restricted to meeting spiritual needs, those God has called to meet physical or social needs may think they have no ministry. When this myth is exploded, these people can find their places in the Body of Christ.

MYTH #3: Most ministry takes place when the church is gathered

In some ways, the church is like a sales team. When the team meets, its members may celebrate accomplishments. Sales managers may inspire and motivate the team, give them a vision of what is possible and provide training. Group members encourage one another. But what would you think of that sales team if, upon leaving the meeting, the members made little effort to sell? Would you suspect they missed the point of the meeting?

We in the church are not a sales team but a ministry team; yet, we gather for many of the same reasons — to celebrate, to expand our vision, to be inspired to fulfil our mission, to give and receive encouragement, and to become equipped for ministry. If, at the end of our gathering, we go out into the world but make little attempt to minister, what does that suggest?

Unless we minister as the church scattered the rest of the week, we've missed one of the main points of coming together. As we heard one pastor say, "The church is most the church when the sanctuary is empty."

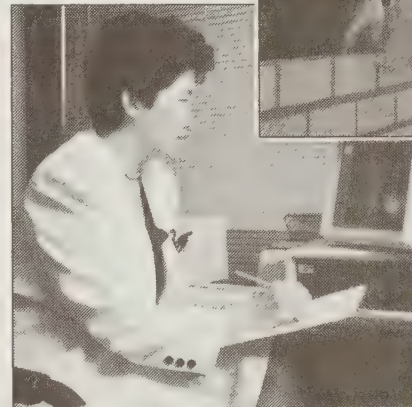
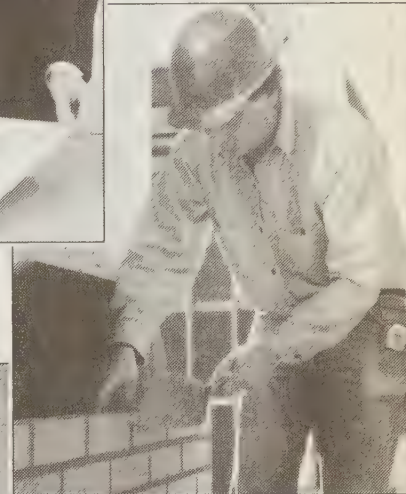
MYTH #4: Some Christians are called to do secular work

Precision Histology is a medical laboratory in Oklahoma City that prepares microscope slides of tissues from which doctors diagnose patients' illnesses. As the world measures success, Precision Histology has not made much of a splash. For the first few years, owner Jan Lundy had to reinvest all her earnings into the company to buy equipment and,

today, she earns only a modest wage. But that's OK with Jan because Precision Histology is succeeding at what it was created to do.

"From the beginning, our main purpose has been to help people," Jan explains. This happens in various ways. Jan hired lab technicians with little technical skill and gave them on-the-job training. These were often mothers from low-income families who lacked the resources to pay for formal training. One technician she hired was already trained but was recovering from drug addiction and was not physically able to go back to work in the hospital. Jan made it possible for employees to keep their children with them at work by providing a play area and, when necessary, hiring a child-care worker at no cost to the mothers.

The lab prepares slides at no charge for three local non-profit clinics serving low-income patients. But, at its most basic, the lab ministers through the services it is paid to provide. As the company name implies, Jan insists on work of the highest quality. "I treat each slide as if it were for a member of my own family," Jan says. "After all, each one is for *someone's* mother, brother or sister. Doctors need to be able to interpret



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slides easily and accurately. If my slides enable them to do that, I am ministering to patients whether they know it or not."

The world says there are two kinds of work — sacred and secular. The dictionary defines secular as "not holy" or "not sacred." But the Bible tells us we are to do everything — even eating and drinking — to the glory of God (I Corinthians 10:31). For the Christian, every activity is to be sacred.

If God directs someone to be an auto mechanic, it is because God can better use that person to meet needs as an auto mechanic than as a pastor or missionary. Every Christian is called to full-time Christian ministry. Any Christian can transform a legitimate "secular" job into a ministry by approaching that job with a commitment to meeting people's needs as an expression of God's love.

God doesn't call anyone to do "secular" (unholy) work. He calls us all to bring honor to God and to minister to people's needs through whatever work we do.

Ready to join?

Once our understanding of ministry is broad enough, we can then discover what particular part of Christ's mission God is calling us to do. Two invaluable clues to this call are pain and joy.

PAIN: *Where do you mourn with Jesus for the pain in the world?*

JOY: *What would bring you joy in that painful situation?*

When you can answer those questions, you have probably found your call. As Frederick Buechner says, "The place God calls you to is where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet."

Once the church explodes these four ministry myths, helps members identify their calls to ministry, then supports them in creatively fulfilling those calls, we will, as Trueblood predicted, experience something like a revolution.

In fact, the revolution has already begun. Has it come to your church yet? **R**

Adapted with permission from *The Lay Ministry Revolution: How You Can Join* by Eddy Hall and Gary Morsch (Baker Books). Eddy Hall of Goessel, Kansas, is a church consultant. Gary Morsch, MD, of Olathe, Kansas, is chair of Heart to Heart International, a volunteer organization that mobilizes community resources to alleviate world suffering.



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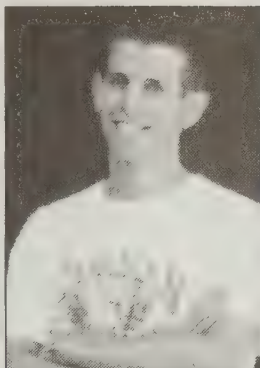


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Faces of Faith



Brian DeWolf was born in Milton, Ontario, and lived there for 19 years. From the beginning, he attended Knox Church, becoming a member in his early teens. He has been involved in the church, Sunday school and was caretaker of the church for a few years. He attended Triennium '92 and '95 and Rise Up '94. Since Rise Up, he has been involved in the Presbyterian

Young People's Society (PYPS) and is currently president of the Toronto/Kingston PYPS. DeWolf is in fourth year of business at McMaster University. He hopes to pursue a degree in social work and have a career in that field.

Summer holidays are a time of spiritual growth and experience for him. The past few summers, he has experienced a mission trip to Mexico City, ministry at XCape (a drop-in centre for youth), counselling at Pioneer Camp, LIT director at Camp Iona, General Assembly in Ottawa, two summers working with grades 1 to 3 at a Roman Catholic elementary school. This summer, he went to Africa with Target Earth and World Vision.

What is your earliest memory of church life?

Singing "If I Were a Butterfly" with the actions in Sunday school.

What musical piece most inspired you?

"You Tell Me That You Love Me" — a song about the power of God's love and how God relates to us

What is your favourite biblical book, and why?

I John — talks about God's love for us and what love really is

If you could invite anyone (past or present) to a dinner party, whom would you invite?

Mother Teresa and Henri Nouwen

What was your most embarrassing moment in church?

My church had a send-off for seven girls and me who were going to Triennium '95. The minister started her send-off speech with, "Today, we are here to see Brian and his harem off ..." My face got pretty red

What do you find most irritating about the church?

Our constant need, or presumed duty, to judge causes the world to fear Christians and, ultimately, God. Our attitude

of apathy to others and to God's creation causes us to be more and more irrelevant in this world

Is there one cause that is especially close to your heart?

The healing of God's creation — both people and the environment

What is your favourite all-time movie? Why?

Good Will Hunting because it's a story about hope and how loving a person can bring about healing

What is the latest book that changed your life? How?

Life of the Beloved by Henri Nouwen. It deepened my view of God and how God sees me. Nouwen also challenged me to look truthfully at myself

How do you think the church can better minister to young people?

Treat young people with respect and consideration as you would any other person, recognize the difference in generations and how that applies (e.g., to worship) and let us make mistakes and learn from them

Where do you hope to be in 20 years?

It doesn't matter where I am, but who I am. I hope to be a person who is real, who is becoming ever closer with God, who is deepening friendships, who is making a positive difference in people's lives

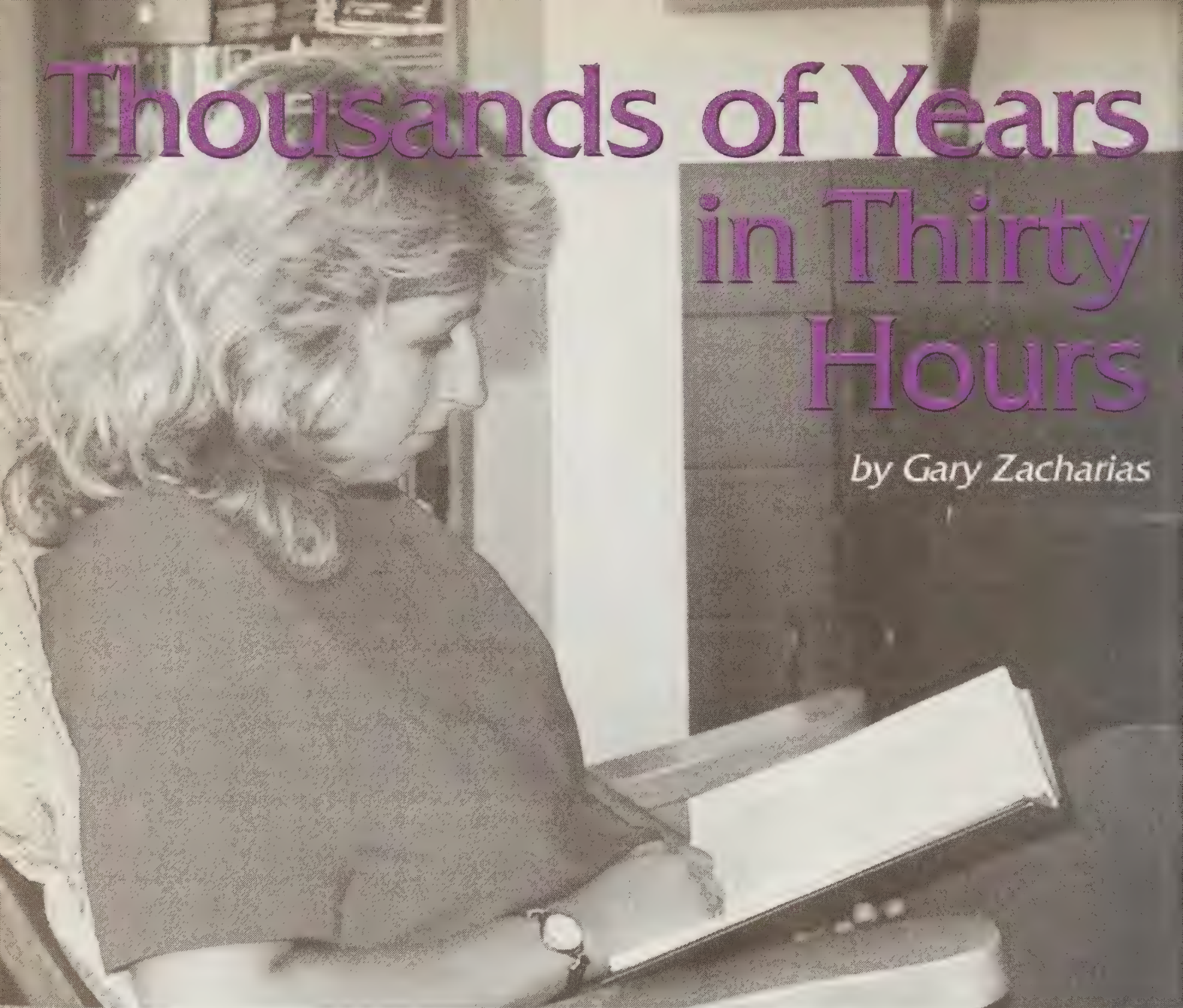
Write your own epitaph.

He was a real person who walked with God and loved others and himself as best he could

Sarah/ dreaming

I am always returning
here to this vast desert
childlessness
watching the men turn to leave
me to pilgrim through
the holy nights alone
belly swollen
in hunger, discontent
dreaming of daughters not sons.

— A. S. Woudstra



Thousands of Years in Thirty Hours

by Gary Zacharias

One Sunday, the high school teacher at our church asked the students to break up into groups. One of their assignments was to summarize the book of Esther. As a high school adult sponsor, I walked around the room, trying to help. Pencils lay untouched; no one was writing anything down. Why? Most of the kids had never read Esther. The teacher ended up having to change his plan and explain the story to them. Now, these weren't all new Christians; many had been believers for years.

As I saw the reaction to the assignment, I realized many people, not only high-schoolers, are unfamiliar with the Bible. I think many of them feel overwhelmed at the idea of reading the entire book. Those who bravely start in Genesis bog down somewhere in Leviticus, feel-

Reading selected passages from the Old and New Testaments provides a bird's-eye view of the Bible

ing frustrated and bored. For new Christians and those who feel the entire Bible is too big an undertaking, what's needed is a guide to biblical highlights.

As a college English professor who has taught the Bible as literature, I have had to compile a condensed list of key books and chapters for my students to read. The challenge is to cover the major people, stories and themes. The following analysis with the list of key chapters

amounts to about one-third of the Bible. Maybe this list will help give you a head start toward understanding this sacred book that has been protected at the cost of many lives over the years. It's our duty to read it and apply it to our lives.

The first part of the Old Testament gives us the early history of the human race as well as the history of the special people God chose to work through — the Jews. The book of Genesis is a fascinating collection of great stories: the first people, the first attempt to reach God on their own, crimes and punishments, faithful Abraham, the sneaky ways of Jacob and Joseph's rise to power against tremendous odds (Genesis 1-4, 6-9, 13, 15-19, 21-22, 24-25, 27-30, 32-33, 37, 39-45). Genesis ends with the Jews in Egypt; Exodus deals with the miracu-

Photo: Tim Faller

lous escape from slavery under the leadership of their hero Moses (Exodus 1-17, 19-20). Life could have been good for the Jews, but, like so many of us, they blew their opportunities (Numbers 11-14, 20). Finally, after a long delay, they entered the Promised Land under a fierce general (Joshua 2, 6-8, 24).

Even after gaining a foothold in the land, the Jews had to fight constantly against local tribes antagonistic to the newcomers. They turned repeatedly to leaders who rescued them from their problems; yet, they soon forgot the lessons learned and fell into further difficulties (Judges 4-7, 13-16). Right in the middle of all this struggle and uproar comes a small book that has been praised as a beautifully written love story of a foreigner in the land of the Jews (Ruth). The Jews, dissatisfied as usual, cried out to be like the others around them; they wanted a king even though God warned them this would not be the solution to their problems. They got their king, who turned out to be a failure; but God blessed them with the most famous political leader they would ever have — David. The stories of the first king, followed by David's rise, rule, successes and failures, have fascinated people for centuries (I Samuel 8-31 and all of II Samuel).

Solomon took the kingdom to new heights, but a tragic civil war split the nation. The kings of both sides were mostly huge disappointments. God raised up strong men, Elijah and Elisha, as prophets to challenge the spiritually bankrupt regimes. But the people ignored all the danger signs until fierce enemies from the northeast, Assyria and Babylon, invaded the land and carried off the Jews (I Kings 1-3, 6, 10, 12, 17-22 and II Kings 2, 4-6:23, 17-19, 25). However, God was not done with the Jews. He graciously allowed many to return to their land, but the conditions were harsh — enemies lived there, the words of Moses had been forgotten, and city walls lay in ruins. Two strong leaders overcame these difficulties, providing great lessons in leadership (Ezra 3 and Nehemiah 1-2, 4-6, 8-9, 13). The history books end with an amazing escape from sure annihilation at the hands of a rabid Jew-hater (all of Esther).

The next section of the Old Testament is composed of various poems. We encounter the sufferings of a righteous man and wonder why (Job 1-14, 38-42). We know the Bible is the word of God to humanity; but the next book, the Psalms, might be thought of as humanity's word to God — our prayers and praises directed to God (Psalms 1, 8, 19, 22, 23, 51, 68, 90, 103, 139). Proverbs and Ecclesiastes are examples of wisdom literature — thoughts on life by those who have experienced it (Proverbs 1, 4, 10, 31 and all of Ecclesiastes). The Song of Solomon is a beautiful series of love poems exchanged between a man and a woman (Song of Solomon 2, 4).

The last section of the Old Testament is devoted to the writings of the prophets — men chosen by God to deliver sermons of rebuke to the Jews and other nations as they wandered far from God. The most famous and the longest is Isaiah, the prophet known for beautiful phrases, who wrote of both disaster and

future glories (Isaiah 6, 25, 36-40, 52-53, 55). There were others who also wrote of visions, prophecies and warnings (Ezekiel 1-4, 37-39, Daniel 7-12). The first half of Daniel contains some of the best-known Bible stories (Daniel 1-6). One other prophet is interesting to read about because he doesn't seem to be as courageous and noble as the others; he runs from God with surprising results (all of Jonah).

The New Testament is split into three sections too. The first are the historical books, similar to the initial section in the Old Testament. Three different authors give us a similar, overlapping view of the life of Jesus. You can read any, but I would suggest Luke because it gives a lot of details (it's the longest of the three Gospels mentioned). Luke emphasizes Jesus as the Saviour of the whole world, and he shows Jesus interacting with outcasts of the time — women, children, the poor, the oppressed (all of Matthew, Mark or Luke). You should also read

Reading the Bible Every Day

by Ken Hatch



Reading my Bible almost every day of the week, every week, began when I was determined to know God better. I figured I had already covered the first step, praying. The next thing that made sense to me was reading the Bible.

Each night, I ask myself what kind of mood I am in. From there, I decide which part of the Bible to read. For example, when I am sad or lonely, a psalm or two will pick me up. If I am interested in growing in my faith in a significant way, I read one of Jesus' parables. If I am a bit distracted and need something in the Bible to grab my attention, I read a war story from Kings or Samuel.

Getting into the habit of reading the Bible regularly started by reading a paragraph each night, then two paragraphs and, then, as I became more and more interested in what I was reading, I began reading entire chapters in one night. Some chapters are longer than others, and so I just stop reading when I feel like it. The Bible is always there, so I can continue a story or theme the next time. While becoming devoted to reading the Bible, I also set a time of day apart for reading it. It became part of my schedule to read the Bible around 10:30 at night. It is easy to adjust if I want to.

It may sound a bit like dieting or quitting smoking in the reverse, but I think reading the Bible has got to be the easiest habit to get into and, definitely, one of the healthiest. **R**

Ken Hatch, 17, a Grade 12 student, received a Bible and a challenge to read it from St. Andrew's Church, Calgary, when he was in Grade 6.

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John because it is a different Gospel that doesn't cover the same events as the others. It is less a history and more of a meditation on the theological significance of Jesus and his divinity (all of John). To complete the history of Jesus and his Church, you should read portions of Acts, the second part of Luke's history that started with his Gospel. Here you encounter the courage, joy, conflicts and missionary outreach of the early believers (Acts 1-4, 6-8:3, 9, 15-17, 26-28).

The second section of the New Testament is composed of letters sent by Christian leaders to churches or to individuals they knew well. You should start with the longest one that presents a clear, complete explanation of salvation and the Christian life (Romans). Others discuss important specific issues: church worship, spiritual gifts and the coming resurrection (I Corinthians 11-15); an emphasis on salvation by grace rather than works (Galatians); the church and personal relationships (Ephesians); the coming of Christ (I Thessalonians 4-5); faith (Hebrews 11-12); good lessons on the Christian life (James); and the importance of obedience and love as characteristics of the Christian (I John).

The last section of the New Testament is composed of only one book, but what a book it is. Revelation is a visionary roller-coaster ride that has puzzled people for centuries. It is full of strange symbols, unusual animals and awful events. The ending is comforting to all Christians for its uplifting vision of God's triumph and the creation of a new world (Revelation 1, 4-6, 11-13, 17, 19-22).

That's it. If you follow the above reading suggestions, you will have worked your way through most of the important Bible passages in probably less than 30 hours of total reading time. Your knowledge of the Bible will have improved significantly, and you will feel good about what you have accomplished. More important, God's word will be more real to you. Later, you may feel confident enough to go back and read the rest of the Bible. There are hidden treasures throughout the book awaiting discovery. Enjoy the trip. **R**

Gary Zacharias is an English professor at Palomar College in San Marcos, California.

The Revenge of the Fruit-Cakes

Tom Dickey

You mix 16 tons and what do you get? Well, if you're the Dorcas Gordon Group of Grace Church, Calgary, you get about seven years' worth of fruit-cakes. And, although anyone (with the possible exception of Graham Kerr) would feel another day older after baking all those cakes, this group definitely does not end up deeper in debt.

Every year since 1962, the members of the group have gathered the third week of September to bake fruit-cakes, using the same recipe they began with 37 years ago. When you look at the quantity of ingredients mixed during those years, it reads like a recipe from "The Joy of Cholesterol Cookbook" — 14,219 pounds of butter, 10,955 dozen eggs, 23,125 teaspoons of salt — but, for Grace Church, it is a recipe for success. From the time the Dorcas Gordon Group first put spoons to mixing bowls, the bakers have raised \$391,125.

That money has contributed to the projects of the Women's Fellowship, an

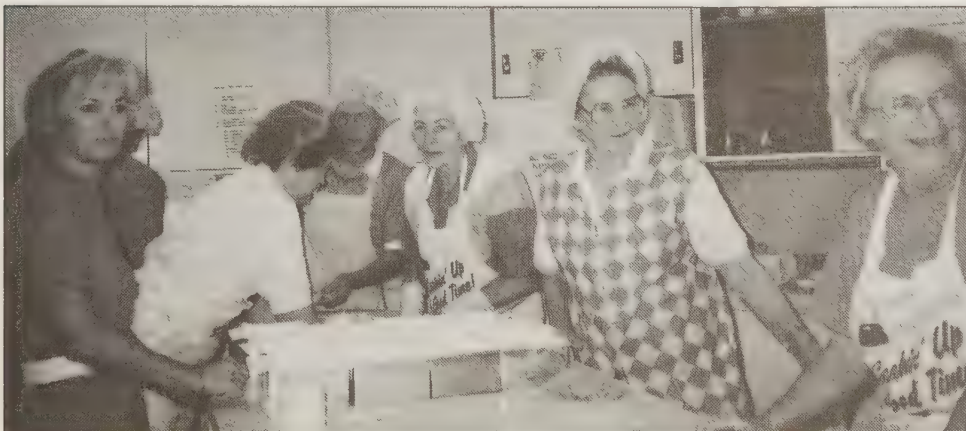
umbrella organization of several women's groups within the congregation whose goals are to promote the spiritual, educational, social and financial welfare of the church. Each group chooses a fund-raising project, culminating with the annual church bazaar in late October.

When it comes to raising money, the Dorcas Gordon Group of Grace Church, Calgary, takes the cake

Fellowship funds go to many causes: the Calgary-MacLeod WMS, Camp Kannawin, Inter-faith Food Bank, Meals on Wheels, Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter, Mustard Seed, the upkeep of the church kitchen and lounge, and the maintenance and beautification of the church and its grounds.

Thirty-seven years ago, such a fund-raising idea might have seemed ... well, OK, OK ... nuttier than a fruit-cake. But, for the members of the Dorcas Gordon Group of Grace Church, baking cakes for three to five days in September is a lot easier than working 10 to 12 months a year making dolls clothes. And more (ful)filling. **R**

Based on a report by Kay Caspell.



Practice makes perfect. The Dorcas Gordon Group of Grace Church, Calgary, has making fruit-cakes down to an art-form.

Quiet, dignified, always clean, she's in her 70s now. We became accustomed to seeing her sit quietly at the back of the Hall every morning during drop-in hours. As we came to know her, she told us that she had somehow "lost track" of her pension and had lost her housing. She was sleeping at Out of the Cold programs every night and depending on the Hall for food and shelter in the morning. We tracked down her pension and applied for housing. This week, she moved into her own room in a supportive housing building. We rejoice with her.

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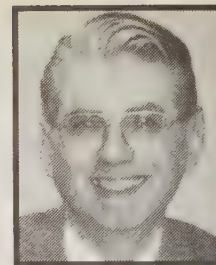
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A Delicate Balance

Is presbytery's first duty to the minister or to the congregation?

"To the presbytery belongs the care and good order of the churches within the bounds" (Book of Forms, section 200).

The elders and ministers who constitute the presbytery exercise a pastoral as well as a legislative and judicial role with respect to congregations in their care. We claim to be a "connectional" church, not "congregational." This means we are bound in covenant together to seek each other's welfare through the agency of the higher courts of the church, such as presbytery. And, so, if one part of the body

suffers, all suffer together (I Corinthians 12:26).

Although this may not be widely experienced by people in the pews who are mostly concerned with their own congregational life, it is often a palpable experience for those of us who are members of presbytery. We hurt when congregations find themselves in disarray or with dwindling numbers and we are deeply affected when a minister finds himself/herself in trouble. We also rejoice together when we see signs of new life and we are able to share good news.

The question you pose may arise out of a situation where you feel that presbytery is protecting the minister to the disadvantage of the congregation. You may feel, as some do, that presbyteries are loath to discipline one of their members, thus showing by their actions they are more concerned with the fate of a minister than with the future of a congregation.

Well, let it be stated for the record, this sometimes happens. I have heard it said, not without some justification at times, "They [the clergy] are circling the wagons" or "They always protect their own." It should not be so. Our presbyterial system of church government provides the remedy against favouring ministers over congregations. After all, our higher courts (presbytery, synod and General Assembly) are "balanced" with equal representation of ministers and elders. Nevertheless, all too often elders do not exercise their authority as effectively as they could, and the clergy predominate in the proceedings.

Presbyteries must act justly, with procedural fairness, in a pastoral spirit and seeking "the mind of Christ" as they go about caring for the congregations and ministers within their bounds. It is a difficult task because, sometimes, the continued health and welfare of a congregation

may make it necessary for a minister to vacate the pulpit when it is no longer possible for that minister to give effective leadership. In such situations, it may become necessary for the presbytery "to sever the pastoral tie." I have also known of cases where the minister, much to his/her credit, has realized that the time has come to move on since his/her continued leadership is no longer helpful. Such ministers could stand on their rights and fight on to personal legal victory.

We are bound in covenant together to seek each other's welfare through the agency of the higher courts of the church, such as presbytery

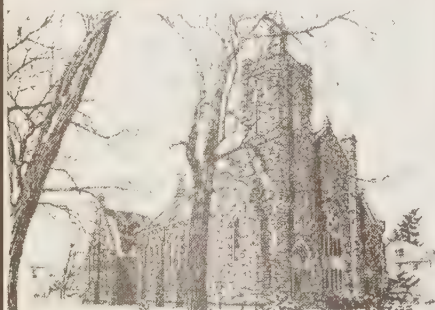
They realize, however, that in so doing they would harm the greater cause of Christ and his people.

Presbytery, however, must always be careful not to sacrifice the legitimate rights of the clergy and is, in fact, under instruction "not to countenance measures tending to sacrifice a minister ... to the unreasonable feelings of his/her session, or of a party in his/her congregation" (Book of Forms, section 377). It is a sad fact that there are times when a small group of unreasonable people with unreasonable feelings makes life difficult for the incumbent minister and, in due course, destroys not only the minister but also the congregation.

When I first read your question, I thought it a rather simple one. Indeed, the question is simple; the practice of the answer is not. **R**

Please send questions for Rev. Tony Plomp to: e-mail TONY_PLOMP@bc.sympatico.ca or 4020 Lancelot Dr., Richmond, B.C. V7C 4S3. Include your name and address for information.

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PCC News

Quebec church damaged by storm, but congregation's foundation remains firm

As Rev. Blake Walker recalls it, Sunday, July 4, was a "precious" day in the life of St. Andrew's Church, Sherbrooke, Quebec. It was his first day back in the pulpit after having surgery on May 6. The congregation, joined by many senior members, family and visiting friends, celebrated Communion. Sunlight shone through the 17 stained glass windows.

Monday, July 5, was very different. A violent storm moving across southern Quebec whipped through St. Andrew's with incredible force, knocking down about 12 metres of the south wall and blowing off the roof on both sides of that end. Tons of brick and slate fell into and around the building. Two of the stained glass windows (dedicated between 1912 and 1922) were completely destroyed. Preliminary estimates put the total damage at \$500,000 to \$600,000.

The winds twisted through the church tower but left it in tact. The church's renowned, ancient Casavant organ, a grand piano, the pulpit and other furnishings also escaped damage.

Shortly after the storm, the mayor of Sherbrooke, Jean Perrault, was on the scene expressing concern and support. St. Andrew's is valued by the community for its architecture and its acoustics.



The sky blue once again, Rev. Blake Walker and Bob Black of the board of managers contemplate the damage to St. Andrew's Church, Sherbrooke, Quebec.

As for the congregation, Walker says that, like the burning bush, it is "yet not consumed." After the storm, the session received numerous invitations to share space. For the month of July, St. An-

drew's joined with a local United Church congregation for worship and, during August, it continued to worship in the United church while its congregation joined with another in Lennoxville.

PWS&D director visits Balkan region

Presbyterian World Service and Development has been playing an active role in getting food aid to the war-torn Balkan region. In partnership with the Mennonite Central Committee and with the help of the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, a shipment of 45 containers of lentils and flour was recently consigned to Action by Churches Together (ACT), a group working closely with the Albanian Orthodox Church.

PWS&D director Rick Fee travelled to the Balkans in late June to check on the arrival of the food aid. He followed the shipment's route from the port in

Thessalonica, Greece, across land into Albania. He arrived as the refugees were folding up their tents and migrating back to their homes in Kosovo.

"The amount of goodwill flowing into the region from all parts of the world was phenomenal," Fee reported. "Huge warehouses the size of two or three football fields were stockpiled and ready for distribution. The key, now, I believe, is to ensure the goods continue to follow those in greatest need while they try to re-establish their lives back in their homeland."

While touring the ports in Thessalon-

ica and in Dures, Albania, Fee had a firsthand look at the logistical problems of distribution and the red tape involved. The experience left him with a renewed sense of the "vital role local partners play in the effective and accountable distribution of goods in emergency situations."

PWS&D has received a great deal of financial support for the Kosovo crisis and is placing an emphasis on food aid that can receive a government match of 4-1 through its membership in the Canadian Foodgrains Bank. PWS&D is also forwarding some grants directly to ACT for material assistance.

Give us land, lots of land

Since 1975, the population of Calgary has more than doubled. During those 25 years, four new Presbyterian churches were erected. However, with the recent influx of people to the city, more are needed.

Early in 1998, the church extension committee of the Presbytery of Calgary-Macleod set out to determine which areas of the city were in greatest need. There were five sectors where growth was obvious, so the committee challenged itself to obtain the presbytery's permission to search for five locations for new church development.

As a result, a 1.4-hectare lot in north-central Calgary has been purchased, and the possibility of a similar site in the south of the city is being considered. For the northern site, the presbytery envisions a church with a large sanctuary and space for congregational and community

programs. Families from other congregations will be commissioned as charter

members, and a church extension minister will be appointed.



The church extension committee of the Presbytery of Calgary-Macleod held a "Time of Thanksgiving" service on a site purchased for a future church in north-central Calgary. On the right is the committee convener, Lisbeth Duncan.

A Malawi experience

Five young Canadian Presbyterians and five adults united for a Youth in Mission tour to Malawi, June 18-July 5. Although YIM has visited Malawi in the past, this was the first time it offered a joint youth/adult tour. The tour leader, Harry Waite, said both age groups expressed enthusiasm for the mix. Participants came from British Columbia, Manitoba and Ontario.

In Malawi, group members met with International Ministries staff and had a

brief look at the work of the church. They also worked with Habitat for Humanity to build a house for an elderly woman at Lake Malawi. After visiting Naming'azi Farm Training Centre, near Zomba, they tried out their entertainment skills at two orphan care centres.

Youth in Mission, a program of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, encourages volunteer mission work and promotes mission education through hands-on experience.

Southern partners bring new insights to PWS&D meetings



Photo: Rick Fee

Standing in front of one of the wonders of the world, Niagara Falls, are the three southern partners who hope to help Presbyterian World Service and Development work its own small wonders. As has been its practice since 1994, PWS&D invites representatives from its partner organizations overseas to be members of its committee, contributing to policy decisions and directions. Taking a break from the most recent committee meeting, held in St. Catharines, Ontario, in April, are: Mercy Ravikant (left) from the community health program in Mendha (Church of North India); Anderson Kamwendo from the Blantyre Synod of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian; and Adilia Amaya Talamante from the Institute for Human Promotion in Nicaragua.

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Canadian Presbyterian appointed to war crimes tribunal

Dirk Ryneveld, a member of session at St. Andrew's Church, Victoria, and a prominent British Columbia lawyer, has been appointed to the United Nations War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague. He began his duties on April 1, 1999. In an interview in St. Andrew's congregational newsletter, *The Link*, Dirk talked about his new job and how it came about.

When the position of prosecutor for the UN tribunal was circulated in the Ministry of the Attorney General in British Columbia, Dirk discussed the possibility with his wife, Fiona. With their daughter and son grown up, and the opportunity available to be involved in a "noble cause," they decided it was a good time in their lives to consider such a change. Dirk submitted an application in early September 1998. He was told only successful applicants would receive a response; so, when he had heard nothing by late November, he assumed the position had been filled.

Unexpectedly, the Rynevelds received a call from The Hague informing Dirk he would be interviewed over the telephone in early December — at 2:30 a.m. The chief prosecutor, Madame Justice Louise Abour, and three other interviewers spoke with him for nearly an hour. He heard nothing further until December 28, when a letter arrived offering him the job of prosecuting attorney, a higher position than the one he applied for.

Dirk accepted "immediately." He is currently in charge of a team of prosecutors and investigators responsible for the preparation of cases against individuals charged with genocide and mass murder during the recent conflict in the former Yugoslavia. It is a one-year renewable contract, but the tribunal has indicated to Dirk it is hoping for a five-year commitment. The Rynevelds are under no obligation to remain more than one year, but Dirk admits the task is overwhelming and will require considerable time and continuity to complete.

Minister Sought for The Presbyterian Church in Grenada

The Presbyterian Church in Grenada is seeking an experienced minister to provide leadership in the Kirk in St. George's and several outlying missions. Proposed length of contract is three years with the possibility of renewal. Attractive benefits include a furnished house and car.

A minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada serving in Canada could have Associate Missionary status with the Life and Mission Agency.

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Application deadline: October 15, 1999

E. H. JOHNSON TRUST FUND 1999-2000 EXCHANGE

The 1999-2000 exchange, sponsored by the E. H. Johnson Memorial Trust Fund, will take place with the Church of Scotland. We expect to welcome visitors from Scotland in November 1999.

Applications are now invited for those wishing to represent The Presbyterian Church in Canada on a visit to Scotland in 2000. The visit will be approximately two weeks in May, with all travel, accommodation and meal expenses paid.

Applicants must be active members of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and hold, or have held, a leadership office in a congregation or in one of the courts of the church. They should be seeking an exposure to the life and witness of another church that will strengthen their sense of vocation and mission. They must be willing to share their experience with congregations upon their return.

Applicants should write one page stating why they think an exchange to Scotland is important and why they believe taking part in such an exchange would strengthen their sense of vocation and mission. Please describe what you would hope to gain and contribute.

Applications/nominations should be directed to: Dr. Marjorie Ross, Secretary, E. H. Johnson Memorial Trust Fund, 50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, Ontario M3C 1J7.

Deadline for applications is October 31, 1999.

CALLS FOR NOMINATION E. H. JOHNSON TRUST FUND 2000 AWARD

Each year, the Trustees of the E. H. Johnson Memorial Trust Fund name an individual to be the recipient of the E. H. Johnson Award given during the General Assembly.

Past recipients have included: Rev. Daniel Szabo (Hungary), Rev. Dr. C. M. Kao (Taiwan), Archbishop Desmond Tutu (Africa), Rev. Glenda Hope and Rev. John Fife (U.S.A.), Ms. Barbara Jackman and Rev. Russell Self (Canada). Rev. John Bell of the Iona Community, Scotland, is the 1999 recipient.

The Award is a recognition of the recipient's outstanding leadership to the Christian community at "the cutting edge of mission." The contribution should have significance on a national or international scale. The award is in the form of a medal and a certificate. It may be accompanied by a financial gift to the individual or to a cause or project suggested by the recipient.

Members and friends of The Presbyterian Church in Canada are invited to place one or more names in nomination for the year 2000 award. Please outline to the Trustees why the person nominated warrants the award.

Nominations should be directed to: Dr. Marjorie Ross, Secretary, E. H. Johnson Memorial Trust Fund, 50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, Ontario M3C 1J7; fax (416) 441-2825; or e-mail mross@presbyterian.ca.

Deadline for nominations is October 31, 1999.

Minister gets bird's-eye view of mission in Korea

Rev. Paul Pok Young Ryu of Canada Ministries was met by familiar faces when he visited the site of the mission centre being developed by the Korean Christian Church in Japan (KCCJ) in Kitakyushu, Japan. On hand to greet him were Rev. Jack and Beth McIntosh of International Ministries who had recently returned from Canada to their mission work in the KCCJ's Seinan Presbytery and the Seinan Korean Christian Centre. Also welcoming him was Rev. Moon-Hong Joo of the KCCJ Kokura Church. Ryu visited several KCCJ congregations after representing The Presbyterian Church in Canada at the International Mission Conference of Korean Partner Churches held in Seoul, May 23 to 28.



Rev. Moon-Hong Joo (left), Beth McIntosh, Rev. Paul Pok Young Ryu and Rev. Jack McIntosh at the Korean Christian Church in Japan mission centre in Kitakyushu, Japan.

Other News

New Zealander Presbyterians fail to find unity at Extra Assembly

In an unprecedented move, The Rt. Rev. Bruce Hansen, Moderator of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand, abruptly adjourned the denomination's Extra Assembly soon after the start of its final day of meeting July 3 in Christchurch. Hansen asked the more than 400 representatives to the four-day Assembly to leave as an impasse had been reached. Voting was inconclusive on three motions concerning the ordination of homosexual ministers and elders by local congregations. None of the motions received the necessary 60 per cent support. Each drew a consistent 46 per cent for and 56 per cent against result.

The adjournment followed a presentation on four motions by members of the Commission on Diversity. The motions called for the whole church and Assembly to "repent of its divisiveness and lack of love and forgiveness over

this issue of homosexuality that appears to have divided the church." The four motions lay on the table and were not voted on.

In his closing remarks, Hansen said: "We will meet again at the General Assembly next year The love of God will go with us and the suffering of Christ will accompany us and we cannot pretend there is any other way."

The final motion of the Assembly was to thank and discharge the Commission on Diversity. The commission spent a year meeting with Presbyterians throughout New Zealand in an attempt to discern how the church might find unity within its diversity. The commission received more than 1,000 submissions and developed a report and recommendations that were presented to the Extra Assembly. (*From the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand Web site.*)

Conferences celebrate Peter Martyr Vermigli's 500th birthday

Although the average Presbyterian might react "Peter who, what?" there is a significant connection between the 16th-century Reformer Peter Martyr Vermigli and The Presbyterian College, Montreal. Canadian Presbyterian scholars, notably Rev. Mariano Di Gangi and Professor Joseph McLelland, have been instrumental in bringing the work of this hitherto neglected theologian to the attention of the 20th century.

The link between Martyr and Montreal was strengthened in 1977 when The Presbyterian College and the McGill University Faculty of Religious Studies sponsored an international symposium on "Peter Martyr Vermigli and Italian Reform." The little group of Vermigli scholars from Britain, Germany, Canada and the United States met in The Presbyterian College auditorium and decided to produce a series of English translations of Martyr's chief works. Volume 5 of the

first 12 volumes was recently published. In another recent development, the senate of The Presbyterian College has established a Peter Martyr Research Fund in support of the ongoing translation project.

To mark the quincentenary of Martyr's birth, three conferences are being held this year. The first took place in July in Zurich, where he spent the last years of his life. Joseph McLelland gave the opening address entitled "From Montreal to Zurich (1499-1949-1999): Vermigli Studies Today."

The other two conferences are scheduled for October, one at the University of Padua in Italy where Martyr spent eight years of study in philosophy and theology, the other in St. Louis, Missouri. In Padua, Mariano Di Gangi will speak on "Vermigli as Pastor." In St. Louis, Dan Shute of The Presbyterian College will present a paper on "And so all Israel will be saved: Peter Martyr and the Millennium."

\$70-billion debt cancellation is not enough, says Jubilee 2000

Organizers of the Jubilee 2000 movement, calling for the cancellation of debts owed by the world's poorest countries, have criticized as "too little" the proposals by leaders of the world's main industrialized countries to ease the debt crisis. But Jubilee 2000 organizers insist the proposals would never have been made if they had not campaigned for debt cancellation.

On June 18, the heads of government from the world's seven leading industrialized nations pledged to write off \$70 billion US of debt owed by 36 of the most indebted developing countries.

But Ann Pettifor, co-founder and director of Jubilee 2000 in the United Kingdom, called the leaders' offer too little. "It's really depressing. These countries owe \$370 billion," she said.

"Getting \$70 billion written off is a success in anybody's book," Pettifor added. "Certainly the G8 feel the pain. But it's not enough for us."

On June 19, tens of thousands of campaigners from around the world formed a 10-kilometre human chain around the centre of the German city of Cologne, where the leaders of the G8 countries were meeting. The campaigners were joined by Cardinal Joachim Meisner, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Cologne, and by several pop stars — Bob Geldof, U2's lead singer Bono, Radiohead's Thom Yorke and the African musician Youssou N'Dour.

A petition bearing more than 17 million signatures supporting the campaign was presented to German Chancellor Gerhard Schroder who was hosting the G8 meeting.

Among the 635,000 signatures from Canada was that of Finance Minister Paul Martin. Martin told *The Catholic Register* he signed the petition at the back of his church. He said his most persuasive argument with other G8 finance ministers was to point out how strongly voters had supported the Jubilee 2000 campaign. (*ENI; The Catholic Register*)



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News Scan

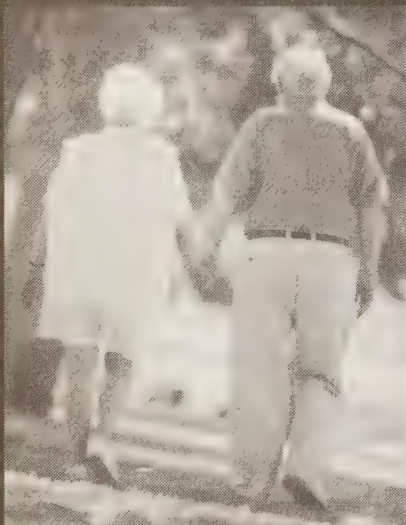
Close, plus a cigar

The biggest ever public gathering of Protestants in Cuba's history is being hailed by church leaders as a sign that Protestant churches are becoming a more potent force in the Communist country. On June 20, approximately 100,000 people attended the rally at Havana's Revolution Square, perhaps best known for its huge portrait of revolutionary soldier Che Guevara. An even bigger crowd gathered there last year to greet Pope John Paul II. Most significant on June 20 was the presence of President Fidel Castro and other government leaders. The rally was organized by the Cuban Council of Churches. (ENI)

Don't drop your sewing needle inside

A group of high school students is hoping there are no wolves around the Crieff Hills Community property in Puslinch, Ontario. The students recently completed a house made of straw bales at the centre as part of a Community Environmental Leadership Program. As well as "house-building," the students studied environmental science and geography, personal life management and outdoor education at Crieff. According to the group's teacher, Mike Elrick, straw makes ideal insulation. It grows quickly and keeps the heat in when it's cold outside and out when it's not. The house is now a storage shed for Crieff. (Source: *The Guelph Mercury*)

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FROM THE MODERATOR

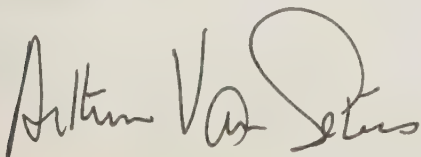
(Continued from page 4)

This past spring, I was preparing to speak at a conference on the biblical roots of Jubilee. In the course of my study of Luke 4, where Jesus read from Isaiah 61 (clearly about Jubilee), I noticed he added a phrase from Isaiah 58:6: "to let the oppressed go free." I realized then that Jubilee was threaded throughout Chapter 58.

This sent me back to Leviticus 25 and to reread passage after passage in the Gospels. The themes of Jubilee popped out all over. Jesus speaks of reversals in the Beatitudes and in the saying about the first shall be last and the last first (which is precisely the effect of enacting Jubilee legislation). In the Lord's Prayer, we seek the coming of God's Kingdom and ask that our debts be forgiven. I've always taken "debts" and "trespasses" to be synonyms for "sin." But what if these are metaphors that concretize sins of usury and encroachment on inherited land? What if we are being urged to ask for forgiveness of economic sins? Then, the Presbyterian use of "debts" may be especially interesting right now!

When I turn to the parabolic preaching of Jesus, I find more of the same. An impoverished widow wins against an unjust judge, probably over a land inheritance (Luke 18). In Matthew 20, all labourers are paid according to need (a primary concern in Leviticus 25) not merit as some of them expected. The gracious father welcomes the prodigal son home (Luke 15), just as Leviticus 25:35 requires. The list goes on.

Jubilee is a jarring act of alternative imagination. But, in the Bible and in the teaching of Jesus, it is also a benediction announcing God's new beginning. Jesus declared that this "year of the Lord's favour" toward the poor and needy was to be fulfilled in the present not only in the future. The church is called to repeat this announcement and work for its realization.



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Presbyterian Record — an old friend for a new millennium

THE PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE, MONTREAL DIRECTOR OF PASTORAL STUDIES

The Presbyterian College invites applications and nominations for the position of Director of Pastoral Studies, to assume duties in August 2000. The appointment will be for a three-year, renewable term, and involves among other duties the co-ordination of field education and instruction in one or more subjects in practical theology. Preference will be given to an ordained minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada with pastoral experience and an earned doctorate in a discipline relevant to pastoral studies.

The College is a Presbyterian and Reformed theological seminary of The Presbyterian Church in Canada preparing candidates for ministry. It is a member of an ecumenical, theological consortium, together with the Faculty of Religious Studies of McGill University, Montreal Diocesan Theological College and United Theological College.

Applications and nominations should be accompanied by a C.V. and the names and addresses of three or more referees. Submissions should be sent no later than November 1, 1999, to: The Principal, The Presbyterian College, 3495 University Street, Montreal, Quebec H3A 2A8. Phone: (514) 288-5256; Fax: (514) 288-8072; E-mail: cxgf@musica.mcgill.ca; Web page: www.mcgill.ca/religion/presbcol.htm.



Lost and Found

I almost lost you there.

I couldn't feel your arms around me any more, or your hand supporting me. Your voice in my mind was mocking, a chimera. I didn't believe it, and I didn't believe in you. You were merely an academic puzzle, an escape from reality, an opiate that made me feel good.

I spent the night in despair. Real despair — the biblical type.

Luckily, the next morning dawned bright and beautiful, the birds were singing and the sun was sparkling off the rain on the grass. I simply couldn't not believe in you on a morning like that.

I think it had been coming for a while, but the trigger was a long discussion with an atheist friend. She argued me down to essentials. I discovered that some things I used to believe in, or I used to be able to defend, I couldn't any more. My own arguments were no longer convincing even to me. And I've always thought if I couldn't defend you (not that you need defence, but you know what I mean) against that kind of attack, then my beliefs needed serious rethinking. Oh, I know it always gets down to "I just believe that." My reasoning or beliefs wouldn't necessarily be valid to someone else, but I always figured they had to be valid to *me*.

I don't even remember now what it was she said that was so troubling. I only remember that feeling of incredible loss, and lostness. Of feeling that I had been fooling myself all along about the world being wonderful, of existence being a good thing, of life having meaning

— even if that meaning was only the fact of living. Nothing had any point and, worse, any beauty; or, if it seemed to have beauty, it was only an illusion, a deception with which to comfort oneself — childish. And the only reason people kept on living was because suicide seemed such an effort.

Maybe we all hit that point, God, I dunno. Maybe those times are actually a good thing. I was getting too complacent, a little arrogant. Thinking I had it all solved — not for the world, maybe, but for me, at least. Still questions to answer, but confident in the answers I knew. Maybe I needed that jolt to force me to renew my faith.

The problem was, though, in that moment, I had nowhere to turn. I was used to turning to you. You weren't there. I know we're supposed to believe all we have to do is ask, seek and knock; but I asked and I didn't hear an answer. And I lacked the energy to seek.

I couldn't turn to my atheist friends, for obvious reasons. They had answers, too, different from mine but still beliefs. But just as my answers weren't good enough for them, theirs were not convincing to me. My friend had taken away something, but could not give me something else in return.

I couldn't turn to other Christians either. There is something

shameful about losing one's faith; I would be an outcast. I didn't want to go to church, for how could I belong in a church when I did not believe? I felt everyone around me would somehow know that I was torn between contempt and envy as I watched their belief. I

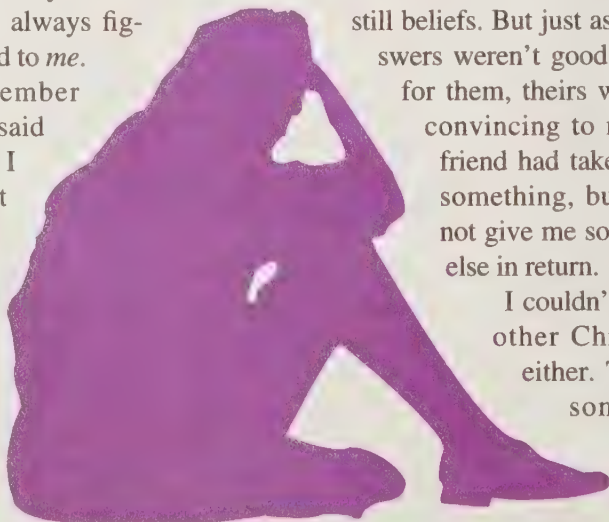
knew I should be working harder, trying to convince myself of the truth about you ... but I lacked the energy and willpower to work. Plus, such a worked-at faith would be a house of cards.

And even if my Christian friends understood, I did not want to be convinced or comforted into renewed belief. If I needed to be convinced of something, how can it be a true belief? Faith is belief that comes from the gut. Intellectual arguments may help consolidate or confirm belief, and they can certainly help resolve doubts or knotty problems, but they cannot provide the hands I used to feel reaching down to help me up.

Your beautiful morning saved me ... this time.

Is there no room in your church for doubters, God? Must we believe in you all the time with absolute unassailable certainty? How can we affirm non-believers, show them your love, without trying to convince them to believe? Must we always cast them out because non-belief is so intrinsically wrong? *Must* I believe, God? And what do I do when I don't? **R**

Kathy Cawsey received her M.Phil. degree from Oxford University, England. E-mail Kathy at kcawsey@hotmail.com.



The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Millennium / 125th / Jubilee



Celebrate!

Together 2000

Together 2000: Christians in Canada Honouring Jesus is a once-in-a-millennium project co-sponsored by the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada and the Canadian Council of Churches to draw Christians across Canada together in marking the 2000th anniversary of Jesus' birth into human history. Together 2000 is beginning with two main purposes: (1) to provide a clearing-house for information on millennium-related events in the Christian community Canada-wide and (2) to encourage and provide suggestions and resources for Christians in Canada for crossing denominational lines and doing a variety of things together to honour Jesus.



The clearing-house will be primarily on the Internet at www.together2000.org as a service to the whole Christian community. Contact Together 2000 with news of what is happening in your area: e-mail carolyn@together2000.org or fax 416-236-4532.

Together 2000 is asking Christians across Canada to plan a Christmas-carolling event on the weekend of December 18-19, 1999, involving all denominations in the community.

Designed to Keep You Warm

The *Celebrate!* Committee announces a national quilting exhibition as one of its millennium projects. An exhibit of this beautiful art-form is being planned to enhance the venues of the General Assembly in Hamilton, Ontario, in June 2000. From the work received, exhibits will be assembled and made available to any church or interested group from June 2000 to December 2001.

If you are an individual quilter or part of a quilting group, the *Celebrate!* Committee invites you to create a quilted article for this historic year. The pieces may vary in size from a minimum of 100-cm (40-inch) square to a maximum of a double-bed size quilt. The theme may be any aspect of your personal or church history, your faith journey or your vision for the future.

Enquiries may be addressed to the project convener: Sheila Kirkland, 431 Oakside Circle SW, Calgary, Alta. T2V 4V3; Tel. (403) 281-6606; Fax (403) 255-1302 (St. Andrew's Church).


Gambling in Nova Scotia

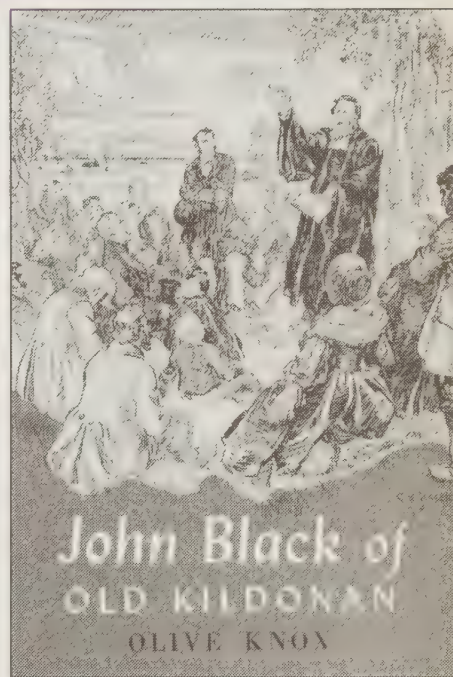
The ecumenical group working on gambling in Nova Scotia is reorganizing to focus on "Release From Bondage" as a Jubilee project for the year 2000. The project will target the victims of gambling and those who profit from this industry.

From Our Congregations

John Black was one of Presbyterianism's most famous missionaries to Western Canada. Using the book *John Black of Old Kildonan* by Olive Knox, Bonnie Zimmer of **First Church, Brandon, Manitoba**, has written a play about John Black. It takes about 10 minutes to perform. You can secure a copy of *Apostle of Red River* by contacting the *Celebrate!* office. It provides a great pattern for those who may wish to write a skit from their own history. Skits like these provide excellent resources for youth and intergenerational events, dinner theatres or during worship and other special events.

Members of **Knox Church, Winnipegosis, Manitoba**, are celebrating their 100th anniversary through an intergenerational history sharing. The young people are collecting, listening to and recording oral histories from older members.

A member of the **Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul, Montreal**, recently purchased an unused, historic Anglican church and had it transported to property he owns in Knowlton, Quebec. Churches in the Presbytery of Montreal have contributed hymn-books, psalters and other materials so a new summer congregation can open in Knowlton! 



PEOPLE & PLACES



▲ A GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY was held at St. Columba Church, Parksville, B.C., to mark the beginning of an expansion and renovation project. Margaret Blaikie, convener of the "Vision '97" building committee, breaks the sod, surrounded by other members of the committee and Rev. Robert Kerr.

MARGARET VANDERZWEERDE (centre) ► was a recent guest at West St. Andrew's Church, St. Catharines, Ont., where she spoke about her work in India. With her are Rev. L. Paul Shobridge and his wife, Marilyn.



▲ JEAN CAMPBELL, a longtime member of Weston Church, Weston, Ont., and an active worker in the WMS, was honoured by her friends at a tea held at the church on March 20. Shown with Jean (seated) are Elizabeth Heath, presenting her with an honorary WMS lifetime membership, and Margaret Boulton, who presented her with the honorary WMS pin of her late aunt, B. Wright.

MISSION AND OUTREACH was the focus when Rev. Rick Fee, director of Presbyterian World Service and Development, was the guest speaker at Orillia Church (St. Andrew's), Orillia, Ont., on April 11. The mission and outreach committee conducted the service and, after a brown bag lunch, Rick answered questions about the work of PWS&D. With him are Helen Macdonald (right), Mission Sunday co-ordinator, and Lois Menu, chair of the missions and outreach committee.



BILL DOWNIE of Grace Church, Etobicoke, Ont., was presented with a plaque of Glen Eagles Golf Club in Scotland on his retirement after 40 years as a member of session. Congratulating Bill are Rev. Chris Carter, clerk of session ► Joan Kohar and Alex Henderson.



Please note: Photos submitted for People & Places must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope if they are to be returned. Also, please try to ensure all pictures are clear and do not include a multitude of people. Colour or black-and-white photos are acceptable, but negatives and slides cannot be used. Thank you.

PEOPLE & PLACES

THE ALBERTON/WEST POINT Joint Youth Group, composed of junior high teens from the West Prince County region of Prince Edward Island, raised \$672.70 in pledges during a 30-hour famine for World Vision. Pictured shortly before breaking their fast are: (on couch) Jennifer Wallace, Jessica Newcombe, Rachelle Arsenault, Katie MacIsaac and Larissa Dumville; (on floor) Michelle Lane, Giselle Arsenault (in hat), Rev. Steve Boose, Krista Bolger, Kevin MacIsaac, Kathy Boose and Ashley Reeves.



THE CHILDREN'S CHOIR of St. Lawrence Church, London, Ont., enriched the worship on Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday with a special anthem at each service.

"SPACE CADETS" FROM the March break "Space Mission Bible Camp" held at Malvern Church, Scarborough, Ont., stand among robots and rock-ets. Joining them are Astro-Granny Ada Ramcharan, Mission Specialist Julia Pallek (galley) and Mission Specialist Fionna Jeffrey (crafts).



MEMBERS OF CALVIN CHURCH, Kitchener, Ont., born before 1920 were honoured at a dinner on May 4. Front row: Alex Varney, Devina McLean, Vivian Grant, Christine Sinclair, Elisabeth Frieman and Chris Black. Back row: Bill Joseph, Don Thomson, Lloyd Kean, Gordon Heughan, Marie Scott, Doris McCabe, Doug Scott and Don Green.



THE MODERATOR OF the 124th General Assembly, William Klempa, was guest speaker at a Presbytery of Waterloo-Wellington dinner held at St. Andrew's Church, Arthur, Ont. Shown with him (centre) are Rev. Helen Allum and Rev. Walter Allum.



PEOPLE & PLACES

THE CONGREGATION OF New St. James Church, London, Ont., dedicated two windows at its 166th anniversary service on April 25. The windows, which celebrate 100 years in the current church building, were paid for by the memorial fund. Vangie Coughlan, chairperson of the memorial fund, is shown with John Aziz, whose artistic skills saw the project through to completion, and Rev. Leslie Files.



THE CONGREGATION OF Knox Church, Kincardine, Ont., celebrated the rededication of the church tower on Palm Sunday. The \$127,000 restoration project, part of the congregation's 1999 sesquicentennial celebrations, was paid for by Easter Sunday.



A RIBBON-CUTTING AND DEDICATION were held at St. Stephen's Church, Ottawa, to mark the completion of a universal access and elevator project. Participating in the ceremony were (L to R): clerk of session David McJanet, Wilma Fairbairn, Bob Hudgin, Norm Inglis, John Sinclair and Rev. John Wilson.

THE CONGREGATION OF Knox Church, Waterloo, Ont., surprised its co-ministers, Brooke and Linda Ashfield, on the occasion of their 10th anniversary at Knox, May 16. It was also the 20th anniversary of their ordinations, their shared birthdays and their wedding anniversary. They were presented with a "burning bush" (in front), a large card signed by the congregation, and two cakes.

Holding the card is representative elder Janet MacDowell.



FOR THE FIRST TIME in its 160-year history, the congregation of St. James Church, North Yarmouth, Ont., has elected women elders. Groundbreakers Kathy Ferguson and Jean Gooding (front, left) are shown with (L to R): Jim Ferguson and Carl Taylor (also new elders), Rev. Gloria Langlois, and current elders Leslie Giles (clerk), George Jenken and Russell Lunn.



Streams of Living Water: Celebrating the Great Traditions of Christian Faith by Richard J. Foster (Harper Collins, 1998, \$30.75).
Reviewed by Laura Alary.

Most Christians have had the experience of being criticized (or criticizing someone else) for lopsided discipleship — over-emphasizing one aspect of the Christian life at the expense of another. “Sure, she goes on spiritual retreats, but where was she when the street mission needed volunteers?” “All he does is talk about personal salvation, but what about global justice?” “They think they can build the Kingdom with no help from God.” What constitutes true discipleship? What does being a follower of Jesus demand of us? How should we worship? Sadly, such criticisms and questions have divided Christians from one another, split denominations into factions and pitted whole churches against one another.

Using the metaphor of streams of water, Richard Foster shows how the variety of Christian traditions and experiences should not be a cause for division, for they flow from a single source: Jesus Christ. Foster devotes a chapter to each of six Christian traditions (Contemplative, Holiness, Charismatic, Social Justice, Evangelical and Incarnational). He offers biblical, historical and contemporary examples of people who exemplify each tradition. From Susanna Wesley to Augustine of Hippo, John Woolman to Dag Hammarskjöld, this cloud of witnesses ancient and modern offers strength and encouragement. They remind readers the imitation of Christ takes many forms.

Foster’s book has its weaknesses. While he addresses the strengths and the potential pitfalls of each tradition, he glosses over some controversial issues, especially when dealing with the charismatic tradition. He insists on harmonizing the gospels and makes some

uncritical assumptions about the authorship of various biblical books. He refers to the Bible as “infallible” without explanation. And, occasionally, he seems to pit faith against intellect. Some would find his thumbnail sketches of church history simplistic. On the whole, however, *Streams of Living Water* is an excellent resource and a joy to read.

A treasure trove of people, anecdotes and references to other classic Christian writings — Foster’s work opens many doors for further reading and reflection. It also helps readers recognize the activity of God in Christian traditions other than their own. Reading this book makes one feel part of a deep and rich heritage; it fosters [no pun intended] respect for the ways others live out their faith in Christ. Finally, by making Jesus the model and source for all the traditions, the book reminds us that, in our vocation as imitators of Christ, we are healthiest and strongest when elements of all the streams flow together in us.

Laura Alary is a post-graduate student at the Toronto School of Theology.

Resources for Ministry With Children reviewed by Dorothy Henderson.

In North Bay, Ontario, a sign outside Sunset Park Public School says, “Visitors Welcome. It takes a Village to Raise a Child.” This saying, which comes from Africa, reminds us that, in Canada, the “village” is many things: good parents, good neighbours, good government policies, good health care, good educational systems.

The following two books remind us of the communal responsibility to raise children. *Our Promise to Children* is written from a Canadian perspective. *All Kids Are Our Kids* highlights the elements that make for good emotional and spiritual health in children and teens.

Our Promise to Children edited by Kathleen A. Guy (Canadian Institute of Child Health, Health Canada, 1997, \$18).

Canadian author Carol Shields says we live with the irony that, while we claim children as our most precious resource, they are also our most vulnerable citizens. *Our Promise to Children* provides some alarming statistics. In Canada, teen suicide has increased dramatically over the past 30 years. Parents are finding it more and more difficult to be responsible. One of every five children under the age of 18 lives in poverty. More children are experimenting with tobacco and alcohol.

Yet, despite these facts, *Our Promise to Children* provides a hopeful outlook. It focuses on four main areas of optimal child development — protection, relationships, community, opportunity and hope. This is where the “village” comes in. No single set of parents, no teacher, no social worker, no clergy can possibly offer all these things. The whole community must pull together to offer them.

The book suggests hopeful things. It is important for infants to get off to a good start, but even those who have a poor start exhibit remarkable resilience. The book offers dozens of examples of excellent community stories, up-to-date facts about children in the appendices and check-lists of how to create a child-friendly community.

And, in case we do not have strong altruistic reasons for caring for our children, the authors point out a compelling reason for looking after children: our economic future is at stake. Children are the future work-force.

While this book focuses on many aspects of well-being — physical, mental, social, emotional — there is only a half-page on spiritual well-being. Even there, the description is disappointing: “To achieve ... spiritual vision, children need



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CLASSIFIEDS

ASSOCIATE MINISTER: St. Andrew's Church, Newmarket, seeks an Associate Minister. Special focus: Christian education and developing a vibrant ministry for and with youth. Send profile to chair of search committee: D. Hamilton, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 484 Water St., Newmarket, Ontario L3Y 1M5, or E-mail: MSRochon@netcom.ca.

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REVIEWS

opportunities to experience art, nature, science and human connection." There is no mention at all of the benefits of belonging to a religious institution or of participating in a church school program. Since about 25 per cent of our population is somewhat regular in church attendance, we can assume that at least this proportion of children has some significant connection with institutional religion.

Our Promise to Children is an excellent book, but we in the church are left to make our own connections. What does it mean to us as Christians to know that the four needs of children expressed in this book (protection, relationships, community, opportunity and hope) are things the church has always excelled at providing?

All Kids Are Our Kids: What Communities Must Do to Raise Caring and Responsible Children and Adolescents by Peter L. Benson, Carl D. Glickman (Jossey-Bass, 1997, \$50.75).

Benson and Glickman interviewed thousands of children, youth and community groups to discover what makes strong and vital young people and what constitutes a supportive community. They conclude that the raising of children and youth is the responsibility of the entire community. It is up to each of us to help children/youth acquire "assets." They need about 50 assets each week in order to have vibrant lives. Young people can "get by" on only 7 or 8 assets, the authors claim, but they will be worried and anxious.

Of main interest is the list of what the writers consider "assets." Most assets are so ordinary they seem too good to be true — being called by name, being noticed, having an adult join a game or look at homework. Ordinary things such as shaking hands with a child at church, greeting the paper carrier by name, enquiring about school — all contribute to a child's overall well-being.

The authors devote a chapter to the positive benefits of religious institutions and instruction. They provide concrete suggestions for the role churches can play in rearing children. There are wonderful stories of adults who join children

REVIEWS

— the police officer, for example, who parks his cruiser wherever he finds himself at noon and takes his lunch into a school to eat with the Grade 2 students.

Finally, while many books about children focus on the critical early years, this book reminds us that, as adults, we can have tremendous influence on children and, especially, on teens. It is never too late to begin good care of young people.

These two excellent books are essential for a church library.

The Story of the Bible: How the World's Best-Selling Book Came to Be (Wood Lake Books, 1998, kit price \$63.50).

This resource, which comes as a kit, is excellent for all ages. It consists of a leader's guide, a workbook for youth and adults, as well as leaders' guides for older children (eight and over) and younger children (four to seven).

This material can be used in a variety of settings — Vacation Bible School, church school, adult Bible study, confirmation class or retreats. There are promotional flyers and a colourful biblical time-flow chart.

The five session topics are: "The Bible — Our Special Book," "The Hebrew Scriptures, part one," "The Hebrew Scriptures, part 2," "Jesus and the Scriptures," "The Bible Through the Ages." Each session, children to adults make imaginative choices for learning — making Covenant boxes, studying stained glass windows, using scrolls, a Bible wonder table, Bible Jeopardy, video clips, drama, research activities, story-telling around campfires.

This excellent resource is basic for church education programs and may be used year after year.

Dorothy Henderson has responsibility for Christian education and ministry with children and youth at national church offices.

Most books reviewed may be purchased through The Book Room, 50 Wynford Dr., North York, Ont. M3C 1J7. Do not send payment with order. An invoice will follow. Please include name and location of congregation. Toll-free order line: 1-800-619-7301, ext. 301, e-mail: bookroom@presbyterian.ca.

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or fax to (506) 854-8905

DEATHS

ANDERSON, HILDA, 85, Ladies Aid, life member of WMS, longtime member of Avonton Presbyterian Church, Avonton, Ont., June 7, 1999.

BRANT, HARRY F., July 4, following a lengthy illness bravely borne. Longtime faithful member, elder since 1966, elder emeritus since 1997 of Wexford (Scarborough, Ont.). Strong concern for all areas of church life, with special emphasis on stewardship, outreach and church growth.

CARTER, WALTER JAMES, died April 15, 1999. Church member for 59 years, organist, choir member, devoted Christian brother of Rev. Charles Carter.

CLARKE, CHARLES "CHARLIE" MURRAY, 89, faithful member, St. John's Presbyterian Church, Port Perry, Ont., former member of the board of managers, died July 16, 1999.

CLEGHORN, DONALD B., 61, member, Knox Presbyterian, Leamington, Ont. Donald died June 27, 1999, surrounded by his loving family. Predeceased by his parents, Rev. Hugh G. Cleghorn (1963) and Mary (1996).

COUTTS, MERRON, member, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Mount Forest, Ont.; former longtime member, Sunday school teacher, choir member, honorary WMS life member, Knox Church, Conn, Ont.; former presbyterial secretary, March 4, 1999.

COWLING, AGNES, a member of St. Andrew's, Bowmanville, Ont., for 52 years and secretary of the WMS Evening Auxiliary for nearly 35 years, died May 3, 1999. She is sadly missed by her friends.

EASUN, HENRY "HARRY," 83 years, a longtime faithful member and an elder for 45 years, of First Presbyterian Church, Chatham, Ont.

FOTHERINGHAM, RICHARD, 87, faithful elder for 30 years, longtime church school teacher, dedicated member, Durham Church, Durham, Ont., died May 26, 1999.

FREW, BLANCHE MAY, 95, faithful member of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Dartmouth, N.S., and life member of the Atlantic Mission Society, died May 16.

HOOEY, ALBERT LEONARD, in his 97th year, member, longtime elder, treasurer and trustee of St. Andrew's, Bowmanville, Ont., died on June 4, 1999.

JONES, MANZER, 102, member, former manager, St. Paul's, Woodstock, N.B., Jan. 16.

MacDONALD, JEAN ANNIE ELLA, age 92, a faithful member of St. David's Presbyterian Church, Toney River, N.S., where she served as organist for 50 years, died April 6, 1999.

MacRAE, IVAN, 88, faithful member and elder of New St. James, London, Ont., May 1.

MARNOCH, BETH, 82, member, Davenport, Oakwood, St. Andrew's (Humber Heights), Grace, Toronto; wife of George; sister-in-law of Rev. Jim Marnoch of Old Kildonan and St. John's, Winnipeg; sister of Bill Cross and Winifred Macpherson; greatly missed by Bonnie, Ray, Glenn and Garry, May 17.

MASNEY, STEVE, died April 24. In his latter years at Knox, children awaited the arrival of "the candy man" each Sunday. Steve was a charter member of Knox, Welland, Ont., Oct. 1948 to April 1999.

McCUTCHEON, GORDON N., passed away on Feb. 7, 1999, in his 79th year. A longtime active member and elder of Lakeview Church, Thunder Bay (formerly First Church, Port Arthur), Ont. His interests in the activities of the church were many: the Boy Scout movement, Sunday school, Presbyterian Men and mission outreach at Oliver Road and Jumbo Gardens. For many years, he was representative elder serving on presbytery and synod. Gordon made a significant contribution to the compilation of the history of the Synod of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario. Survived by his wife, Margaret; daughter, Rev. Beth McCutcheon; son and daughter-in-law, Gordon and Susan; three grandchildren, Linda, Andrew and Allan.

McKEEN, WILBERT, 77, faithful member and elder of New St. James, London, Ont., April 11.

McLEAN, DONALD PETER, lifetime member, elder, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Brampton, Ont., died peacefully August 1, 1999. Over the years, Don served as clerk of session and teacher and superintendent of the Sunday school. He was representative elder in Brampton Presbytery many years, serving on several committees. He was involved with Presbyterian Men and was a strong supporter of

the Canadian Bible Society, *Presbyterians Sharing...* and PWS&D. Don is survived by his wife, Mary; son Rev. Paul McLean (Toronto), daughter Rev. Dianne Ollershaw (Calgary) and their families; brothers Rev. Malcolm McLean (Winnipeg) and Richard McLean (Toronto).

MITCHELL, IAN WALKER, 75, elder and former clerk of session, St. Andrew's, Trenton, Ont., and previously elder at St. Andrew's, Belleville, Ont., and elder and representative elder, Montreal Presbytery, from Briarwood, Beaconsfield, Que., died May 17, 1999.

MONTGOMERY, ANNIE, 92, member 55 years, former organist, St. Paul's, Woodstock, N.B., July 7.

MUNDY, G. EARL, longtime member of Knox, Crescent, Kensington and First Presbyterian Church in Montreal. Served on the board of managers, kirk session and as trustee; accountant of The Presbyterian College. Upon moving to Ottawa, a valued member of Erskine Church, serving on the temporal board and board of trustees. Suddenly on April 4, 1999.

NAGY, IRENE, 69, active faithful member of Central Church, Brantford, Ont., died on May 23; honorary WMS life member and dedicated chorister; former member of Pleasant Ridge Hungarian Church. Mother of Gloria Jean (St. Andrew's, Kars), Randy (Wisconsin), Rev. Elaine (St. Andrew's Hall, Vancouver), Michael (Brantford) and Edward (Toronto).

NOBLE, HARVEY CARLISLE "LISLE," on March 11, 1999, in his 66th year. Lisle served the congregation of St. John's, Cresswell, Ont., as elder and board member. Beloved husband of Joy; father of Timothy and wife Myrna, Barbara and husband Larry, Dick and wife Marion; also seven grandchildren.

RUCKLE, GORDON, 86, faithful member and elder of New St. James, London, Ont., Jan. 25.

SCOTT, MARY, 90, member, St. Paul's, Woodstock, N.B., formerly St. Andrew's, Moncton, N.B., Feb. 5.

SNELLING, WILLIAM, 74, elder and former clerk of session and representative elder, Kingston Presbytery, and custodian, St. Andrew's, Trenton, Ont., died March 27, 1999.

The Transitions column welcomes announcements of special events such as births, marriages, anniversaries, baptisms and the reception of new members, as well as death notices. The rate is 90 cents per word or \$43 per column inch (the lower amount) plus GST.

All notices of pulpit vacancies, recognitions, ordinations and inductions will be charged to congregations: \$10 for the basic notice and 90 cents per word for additional information. (There will be no charge to congregations on the Every Home or Club 50 plans.)

TRANSITIONS

STEPHENS, JACK, 79, elder for nearly 50 years, former clerk of session, and a faithful member for 18 years at Claude, Caledon, Ont., June 25.

STRANG, HARRY, 92, lifelong member, elder and supporter of Caven Church, Exeter, Ont., died March 24, 1999. Survived by his wife, Margaret; five children, 10 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

TAYLOR, PERLEY, 79, died suddenly at Treasure Island, Florida, on March 10, 1999. Perley was ordained an elder in 1956 in the Brookfield Charge, P.E.I. At the time of his death, he was an active elder on the session of Zion Presbyterian Church, Charlottetown. He served as assistant clerk of session, was a former member of the board of trustees, sang in the men's choir, delivered Meals on Wheels, distributed tapes to shut-ins, was active in the Presbyterian Men's Association. He was also a member of the Gideons. He leaves to mourn his passing his wife, Dorothy; son, Cecil; daughters, Elizabeth, Heather and Eleanor.

TOWERS, THOMAS GORDON, MP, passed away at the age of 79 years, June 8, 1999. He was born on the family homestead near Red Deer, Alberta, a rural heritage he cherished throughout his life. He was first elected to the House of Commons as a Progressive Conservative for the Red Deer riding in 1972, and was re-elected in 1974, '79, '80 and '84. During these years in office, he was parliamentary secretary to the solicitor general and the minister of state for Science and Technology. While in opposition, Towers was deputy critic for the Department of Veterans Affairs. Retiring from active politics in 1988, he was appointed Alberta's 13th lieutenant-governor in 1991, an office he held until 1996. Gordon Towers was above all a family man and a churchman, serving for many years as an elder in Zion Presbyterian Church, Willowdale, Alberta. He taught Sunday school and was Sunday school superintendent. To church members, a churchman, a statesman and, above all else, a man whose life centred within the framework of his home and family. Gordon Towers has left all of us a rich and enduring "heritage of thought, word and deed." Towers is survived by his wife, Doris; three sons, Tom (Margaret), Gary (Karen) and Ross (Kerri); and by a daughter, Lynda, and her husband, Rob Purdie.

WEIR, JESSIE IRENE, a faithful elder and devoted member of the Helen Blair WMS, a lifelong member of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Belleville, Ont., died on March 10, 1999.

WHITE, J. ALLAN, 82, faithful member and an elder for 40 years of New St. James, London, Ont., July 7.

ORDINATIONS

Eldridge, Rev. Victoria, Thornhill Church, Thornhill, Ont., Jan. 31.

INDUCTIONS and RECOGNITIONS

Eldridge, Rev. Victoria, West Flamboro Church, West Flamboro, Ont., Feb. 7.

Osborne, Rev. Harvey, Knox, Teeswater; Kinlough Church, Kinlough, Ont., Aug. 15.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES and INTERIM MODERATORS

Synod of the Atlantic Provinces

Lower Sackville, N.S., First Sackville. Rev. Cynthia Chenard, Box 2554, Dartmouth, N.S. B2W 4B7.

Merigomish, N.S., St. Paul's; French River. Rev. Charles McPherson, Box 132, Stellarton, N.S. B0K 1S0.

New Glasgow, N.S., Westminster. Rev. Glenn Cooper, Box 1078, Westville, N.S. B0K 2A0.

St. John's, Nfld., St. David's. Rev. Ian S. Wishart, 5 Chestnut Place, St. John's, Nfld. A1B 2T1.

Springhill, N.S., St. David's; Oxford, St. James; Riverview, St. Andrew's. Rev. Mark McLennan, RR 2, Scotsburn, N.S. B0K 1R0.

Summerside, P.E.I., Summerside Church. Rev. Christine Schulze, Box 32, Tyne Valley, P.E.I. C0B 2C0.

Synod of Quebec and Eastern Ontario

Beaconsfield, Que., Briarwood. Rev. Glynis Williams, Action Réfugiés Montreal, 1410 Guy, Montreal, Que. H3H 2L7.

Beauharnois, Que., St. Edward's; Valleyfield, Valleyfield Church (part-time). Search Committee, 79 St. Georges St., Beauharnois, Que. J6N 1Y9.

Dunvegan, Ont., Kenyon; Kirk Hill, St. Columba. Rev. Edward O'Neill, Box 7, Maxville, Ont. K0C 1T0.

Fort-Coulange, Que., St. Andrew's; Bristol, Bristol Memorial. Rev. Ruth Syme, Box 1983, Deep River, Ont. K0J 1P0.

Ingleside, Ont., St. Matthew's (part-time). Rev. Ian MacMillan, 18220 S. Branch Rd., Cornwall, Ont. K6H 5R6.

Iroquois, Knox; Cardinal, St. Andrew's and St. James. Rev. Ian MacLean, PO Box 94, Prescott, Ont. K0E 1T0.

Montreal, Chambit Church. Rev. Barry Mack, 496 Birch Ave., St. Lambert, Que. J4P 2M8.

Montreal, Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul. Rev. J.C. McLelland, 121 Alston Rd., Pointe-Claire, Que. H9R 3E2.

Montreal, Knox Crescent Kensington and First. Rev. Richard Topping, 3415 Redpath St., Montreal, Que. H3G 2G2.

Montreal, Korean. Rev. John Kim, 298 Rudar Rd., Mississauga, Ont. L5A 1S3.

Pierrefonds, Que., Westminster. Rev. James Douglas, 1345 Lapointe, St. Laurent, Que. H4L 1K5.

Synod of Toronto and Kingston

Ashburn, Burns. Rev. Andrew Allison, Box 138, Leaskdale, Ont. L0C 1C0; (905) 852-1171; e-mail: leaskdalepres@interhop.net.

Bermuda, Hamilton, St. Andrew's. Rev. Nora Gorham, 69 Rowanwood Ave., Toronto, Ont. M4W 1Y8.

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Bolton, Caven. Rev. Issa A. Saliba, 9846 Keele St., Box 5097, Maple, Ont. L6A 1R6.
Bowmanville, St. Andrew's. Rev. David McBride, PO Box 311, Port Hope, Ont. L1A 3W4.
Brampton, St. Andrew's. Rev. Peter Barrow, 38 Edith St., Georgetown, Ont. L7G 3B1.
Cambridge, Knox's Galt. Rev. Kevin Livingston, St. Andrew's Hespeler Church, 73 Queen St. E, Cambridge, Ont. N3C 2A9.
Collingwood, First (associate minister). Search Committee, 200 Maple St., Collingwood, Ont. L9Y 2R2.
Guelph, Knox. Rev. Linda Bell, 2 Cross St., Elmira, Ont. N3B 2S5.
Hillsdale, St. Andrew's; Craighurst, Knox (half-time). Rev. Tim Purvis, Box 26, Stayner, Ont. L0M 1S0.
Kitchener, Calvin. Rev. Angus Sutherland, Central Presbyterian Church, Queen's Square, Cambridge, Ont. N1S 1H4.
Kitchener, St. Andrew's. Rev. Murray Laurenson, 360 Tower St. N, Fergus, Ont. N1M 2N7.
North Bay, Calvin. Rev. Freda & Rev. Graham MacDonald, Box 650, Burk's Falls, Ont. P0A 1C0.
Oakville, Knox Sixteen. Rev. J.B. Kay, 59 Wellington St. W, Brampton, Ont. L6Y 1K8.
Parry Sound, St. Andrew's. Rev. Raye Brown, 1 High St., Huntsville, Ont. P1H 1P2.
Sutton West, St. Andrew's. Rev. Margaret

Robertson, 50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, Ont. M3C 1J7; (416) 441-1111; mroberts@presbyterian.ca.
Toronto, All People (Mahn-Min). Rev. In Kee Kim, 3625 Haven Glenn, Mississauga, Ont. L4X 1X7.
Toronto, Gateway Community. Rev. Robert Syme, 19 Queensbury Ave., Toronto, Ont. M1N 2X8.
Toronto, Knox (Spadina). Rev. Bob Fournay, 1 Glenview Ave., Toronto, Ont. M4R 1P5.
Toronto, Weston. Rev. Clyde Ervine, 15 Lambeth Rd., Toronto, Ont. M9A 2Y6.
Tweed, St. Andrew's. Rev. Chen-Chen Abbott, Box 118, Stirling, Ont. K0K 3E0.
Whitby, St. Andrew's. Rev. Douglas Rollwage, 140 Guildwood Pkwy., Toronto, Ont. M1E 1P4.

Synod of Southwestern Ontario

Ailsa Craig, Ailsa Craig Church. Rev. John Bannerman, 342 Pond Mills Rd., London, Ont. N5Z 3X5; (519) 681-7242.
Blenheim, Blenheim Church (half-time). Rev. Evelyn Carpenter, 60 Fifth St., Chatham, Ont. N7M 4V7.
Crinan, Argyle; Largie, Duff's. Rev. Jennifer Cameron, RR 2, Glencoe, Ont. N0L 1M0.
Delhi, Calvin; Brantford, Pleasant Ridge. Rev. Warren McKinnon, 619 Northdale Dr., Woodstock, Ont. N4S 5K7.
Dundalk, Erskine; Swinton Park, St. An-

drew's. Rev. Pearl Vasarhelyi, General Delivery, Holstein, Ont. N0G 2A0.
Forest, St. James. Rev. Joop Eenkhoorn, 311 Michigan Ave., Point Edward, Ont. N7V 1G1.
Fort Erie, St. Andrew's-Knox. Rev. Donna J. Riseborough, 176 Elm St., Port Colborne, Ont. L3K 4N6.
Glencoe, Glencoe Church; Wardsville, St. John's. Rev. Kathryn Strachan, PO Box 72, Appin, Ont. N0L 1A0.
Hagersville, St. Andrew's; Port Dover, Knox. Rev. Thomas G. Vais, 117 Argyle St. N, Caledonia, Ont. N3W 1B8.
Jarvis, Knox; Walpole, Chalmers. Rev. Jeffrey Chalmers, 44 Linnigton Trail, Dundas, Ont. L9H 7A3.
Komoka; North Caradoc; Mount Brydges, St. Andrew's. Rev. Dennis Carrothers, 901-700 Wonderland Rd. N, London, Ont. N6H 4V3.
Markdale, Cooke's; Feversham, Burn's. Mr. Rick Eidenmueller, RR 6, Markdale, Ont. N0C 1H0.
Niagara Falls, Stamford. Rev. Martin Wehrmann, c/o 515 Scott St., St. Catharines, Ont. L2M 3X3.
North Pelham, First; Rockway. Rev. Elizabeth S. Kidnew, 30 Brookbank Cres., Fonthill, Ont. L0S 1E0.
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- ii $(5/6 \text{ of } \square) - (15\% \text{ of } \square) - 5.2 = \diamond$
- iii $(\square \div \diamond) \times 3.75 \times (\diamond - 2) = \bullet$
- iv $(\bullet + \diamond + \bullet) \div \diamond = \blacksquare$
- v $3/2 \text{ of } (\bullet - \blacksquare) = \blacklozenge$

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
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The *ArithmeCode* word is:



ArithmeCode answer from last issue: I AM

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022

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Stoney Creek, Heritage Green. Rev. Alan McPherson, 165 Charlton Ave. W, Hamilton, Ont. L8P 2C8.

Thamesville, St. James; Duart. Rev. Mary Templer, Box 93, Dresden, Ont. N0P 1M0.
Tiverton, Knox. Rev. Ken Wild, Box 404, Southampton, Ont. N0H 2L0.
Waterdown, Knox. Rev. Bob Dawson, 2138 Brant St., Burlington, Ont. L7P 3W5.
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or Rev. Ferne Reeve (905) 842-2800

A Child's Way

A page to share with the children you love

Written by Karen Timbers,
minister of Elmwood Avenue
Church, London, Ont.

Jesus Blesses Little Children

Scripture Reading: Luke 18:15-17

Little Benjamin's eyes sparkled as he excitedly walked toward Jesus. Jesus looked so kind. He felt safe with him.

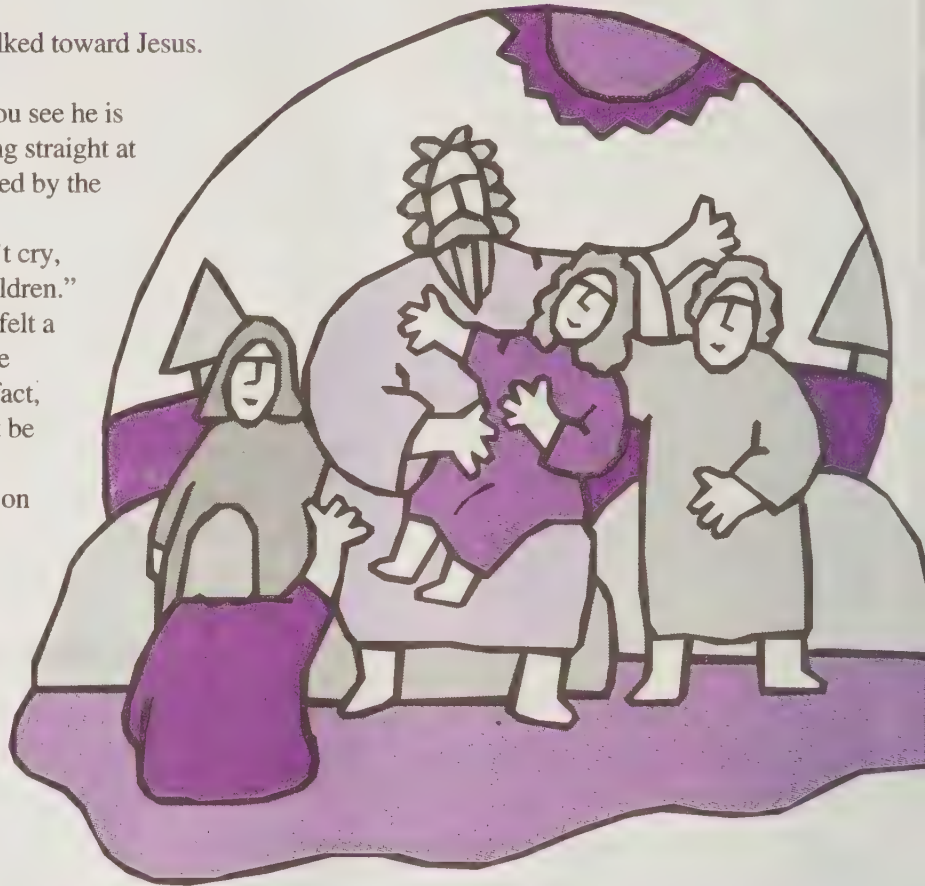
"You over there! Get away from Jesus! Can't you see he is tired?" one of Jesus' disciples sternly called pointing straight at Benjamin. Benjamin stopped in his tracks, frightened by the man's tone. Big tears welled up in his eyes.

His mother quickly bent over to hug him. "Don't cry, Ben," she said. "I guess Jesus is too busy to see children."

She had no sooner finished speaking when Ben felt a strong hand rest gently on his shoulder. And a voice firmly said: "Let the little children come to me. In fact, whoever does not come to God like a child will not be able to live with God forever."

Ben's mouth fell open in amazement. The hand on his shoulder belonged to Jesus! Jesus invited him and, then, all the other children to come and sit on his knee. He placed his hand on their heads and blessed them.

As Benjamin climbed off Jesus' knee, he felt warm inside. He loved Jesus very much.



Questions to Consider

1. Why did the disciple try to stop children from coming to Jesus?
2. What would you say to Jesus if he invited you to sit on his knee?
3. Why do you think Benjamin felt so warm inside?

Activities

- Role-play the story, inviting an adult you love to pretend he is Jesus. Reverse roles and you play Jesus.
- Learn the hymn "When Mothers of Salem," #159 in the *Book of Praise* (1972 edition).
- Make a bookmark and decorate it. Include the words "Jesus loves you" on it and give it to a child you know.

A note to adults reading this page:

- Encourage your church to consider a blessings service in which the minister calls each child by name while placing a hand on his or her head.
- Consider the ways you treat children. We have a tendency as adults to consider children less important in God's eyes.

Prayer

Dear God, I am glad the Bible tells us how important children are to you. I am glad Jesus loves children so much he took time to bless them. Please bless me, too. Amen.

Creative Doodling

Caroline Lockerbie

Recently, I had a birthday. It was not a significant one. I am miles past 21, yet still far enough away from the half-century not to get much attention.

Every year, I wish for a crystal ball to help me map out the future — to see the pot-holes ahead and the routes to take to make everything “right.” Instead, I receive lovely presents — expressions of my family’s love. Of course, I am comforted in my disappointment about the crystal ball in knowing that the best and safest route into the future is living each day faithfully to God.

One of my birthday presents was a cross. The artist fashioned it from a cross in the famous Irish *Book of Kells*. What was special about this cross was that it came from a collection of doodles found in the margins of the pages. It was not initially designed to be the main focus of a page; rather, it was likely a flight of imagination of the scribe copying the Scriptures.

I happened to leaf through some of my own notes and discovered how much doodling I do in the margins of pages. Most of you probably do the same at meetings or lectures. Check the edges of the church bulletins. We do not leave much room, do we! Doodles are the visual products of our minds as they wander over ideas, as we put ourselves and our experiences into the theory of life.

In some cases, doodles are the most important marks on the page for they represent how we have begun to come to terms with new ideas or new situations in our lives. Doodles are often the creative beginning of something new. The general offering envelope The Presbyterian Church in Canada uses today began as my own doodling in the margins of a

printed agenda at a meeting of the national stewardship committee 10 years ago. Who knows, maybe your car started out as a doodle by an engineer at a boring production meeting. The bits in the margins cannot always be totally ignored. Good stuff happens in the margins!

Good stuff happens in the margins

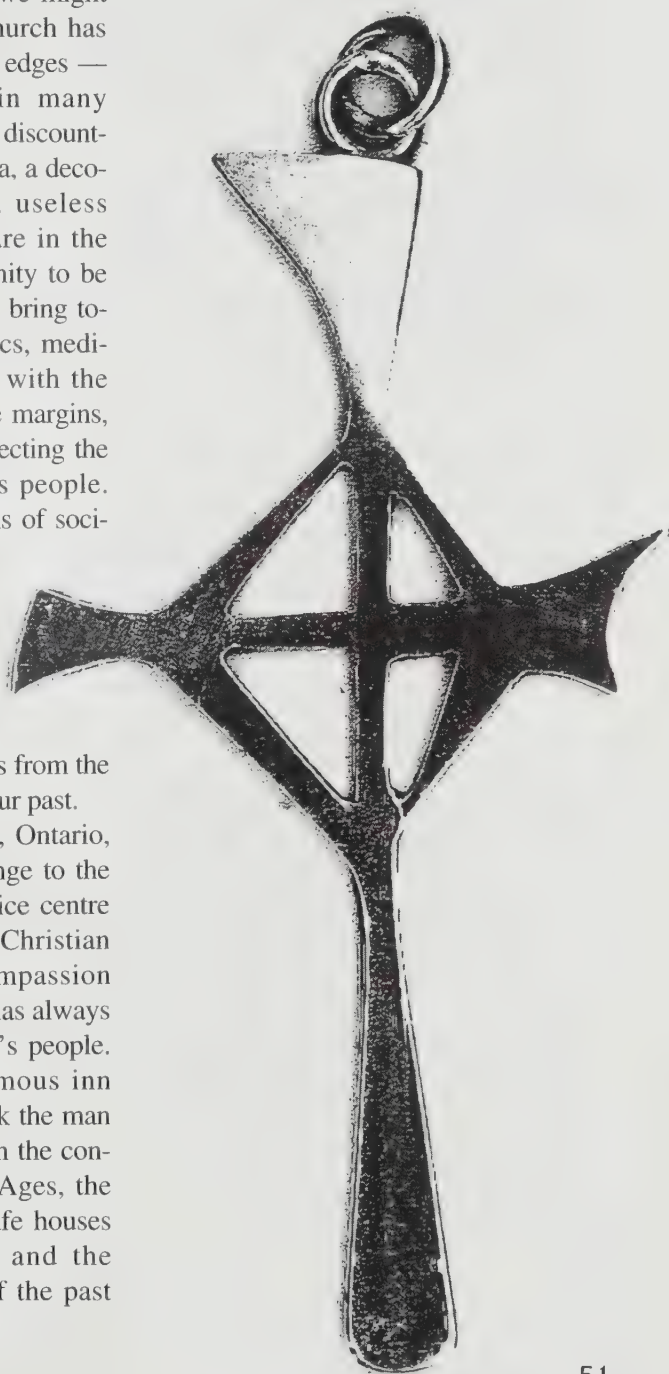
On a page that we might call society, the church has been pushed to the edges — to the margins in many cases. We are often discounted as a frill, an extra, a decoration or, worse, useless trappings. Yet, because we are in the margins, we have the opportunity to be creative, to be new, to begin to bring together the theory (of economics, medicine, education or theology) with the reality of life for people. In the margins, we can find new ways of connecting the dots between God and God’s people. Now that we are in the margins of society, we can bring together some old resources, some old ideas, even some old doodles — old dreams — and connect them with modern needs and experiences.

Being in the margins can free us from the formal agendas of society and our past.

Where I live in Burlington, Ontario, the mayor has issued a challenge to the community to develop a hospice centre in the city. The biblical and Christian tenets of hospitality and compassion have meant care for the dying has always been a central activity of God’s people. It was played out in the famous inn where the Good Samaritan took the man he found lying half-dead and in the convent hospices of the Middle Ages, the public health programs and safe houses of John Calvin’s Geneva, and the church-organized hospitals of the past few centuries.

Our faith calls us to provide care, and our community needs care. Perhaps, in the margins, we can doodle with a plan that might bring the two together. **R**

Caroline Lockerbie is the minister of Strathcona Church in Burlington, Ont.



Celebrating the *FLAMES* initiative Mission 1999-2000

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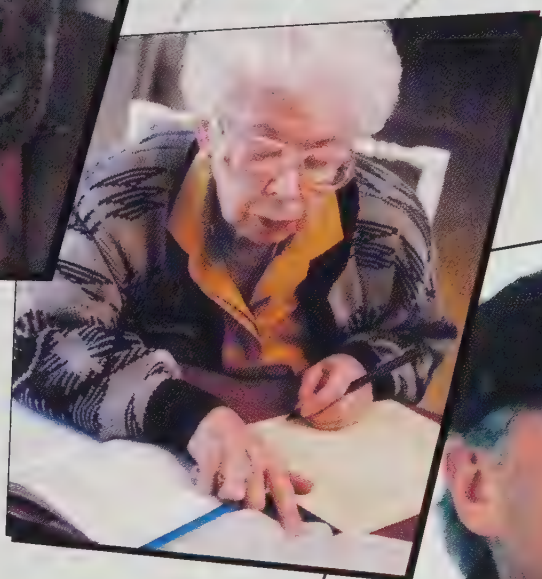
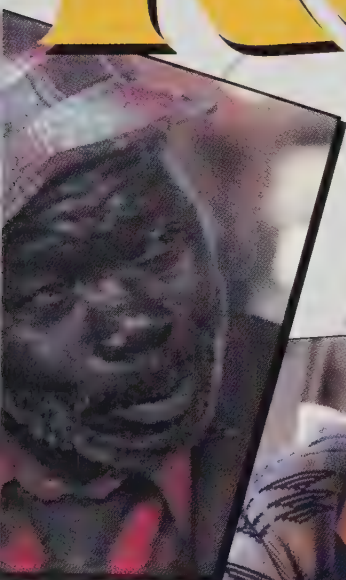
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50 Wynford Drive, Toronto, Ontario M3C 1J7. 1-800-619-7301 ext. 267, 272

PRESBYTERIAN Record

October 1999

International Year of the Older Person



Comfort for the Aging

In Romans, the most mature of Paul's epistles, he says: "If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's" (Romans 14:8). Period! That is the fundamental and absolute word of Scripture. But that word is immensely satisfying to old people. I never try to give any blueprints of eternity or heaven or eternal life since, by definition, it is utterly impossible.

— Joseph Sittler



An elderly man who was talking about how old he was paused for a moment and then said, "Well, let's just put it this way, when I was a boy the Dead Sea was only sick."

— James A. Simpson

A minister announcing his retirement said, "I appreciate the attitude of wanting to die in harness; but, while this may be all right for the old horse, it is seldom good for the harness."

— James A. Simpson

Dealing With Aging

Deal right away with the faults that make old age ugly. Learn to be unselfish, to rest in the Lord, not to burden others, to dispense love, to discipline the tongue, to enjoy loneliness and to live a life of prayer."

— Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

A human being would certainly not grow to be seventy or eighty years old if this longevity had no meaning for the species.... The afternoon of human life must also have a significance of its own and cannot be merely a pitiful appendage to life's morning.

— Carl Jung in *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*

Sometimes it is only in our aging that we realize how some folks loved us, perhaps at great cost, out of pain and loss and brokenness. Maybe we have to grow old to know.

— Howard H. Remaly



From "Ode on Intimations of Immortality"

What though the radiance which was once so bright
Be now forever taken from my sight,
Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower;
We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind;
In the primal sympathy
Which having been must ever be;
In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering;
In the faith that looks through death,
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

— William Wordsworth

Without the presence of old people, we might forget that we are aging. The elderly are our prophets; they remind us that what we see so clearly in them is a process in which we all share.

— Henri J. M. Nouwen and Walter J. Gaffney in *Aging: The Fulfillment of Life*



Zeroing in on the Millennium

The other day, I heard someone say that one airline will be putting all its chief executives on one of its planes on New Year's Eve. They will greet the New Year in the air to ensure the airline has dealt with all the Y2K bugs. Failure would mean there would no longer be an airline or, at least, no executives of the airline. I suppose that is one way to deal creatively with the problem. Most of us would not be willing to tempt fate in the same way.

On the other hand, not everyone is planning to stay home in the safety of their own bunkers when the year 2000 rolls in. My son the drummer has been offered a couple of opportunities to play that evening at \$800 a shot. Expect hotel rooms and meals to escalate many times. There will be big money to make.

Meanwhile, the Israeli tourist bureau would like us all to be in Israel for the big event. I would go only if I could have some assurance that all Apocalypse-minded Christians were securely locked up somewhere. The evening is sure to entice the crackpots out of hiding to re-enact a scene from *The X-Files*.

The year 1900 was preceded with predictions of gloom and doom, often with images of demons waiting in eager anticipation to wreak chaos upon humanity. One hundred years later, the same fears are expressed in cybertalk about Y2K — about computers that cannot cope with double zeros, resulting in a breakdown of banking, utilities and social systems. Despite reassurances from authorities, even people of faith may wish to add a few loaves to the larder — just in case.

Now, here's a suggestion should no glitches appear on January 1 and if life goes on pretty well normally. Why not give the unused emergency rations to the local food bank or to a refugee organization as an act of thanksgiving for a safe passage into the year 2000.

The year 2000 is also a moment pregnant with teaching possibilities for the church. Christians who look for the fulfilment of apocalyptic events from the books of Revelation or Daniel in the minute details of their everyday lives need a reminder of Jesus' words: "About the day and the hour no one

knows, neither the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father" (Mark 13:32). The Bible offers no basis for equating the year 2000 with Jesus' return, the kingdom of God or the end of the world. As many others have reminded us, even if the year 2000 is a significant event in this regard, because of mathematical miscalculations, we have already missed it.

The move to 2000 also provides the opportunity for Chris-

tians, who may have little in common with those who speculate over the details of the End Time, to reflect on the meaning and purpose of their lives and the history of which they are a part. Christians share the conviction not only that history is headed somewhere but toward a consummation in Christ (Ephesians 1:10). Ulti-

mately, the story about Jesus — his life, death and resurrection — is also about the final outcome of history.

Most of us are not prepared to speculate on the details of that event, nor should we. However, the confidence such a belief elicits and the expectation of that event should not be abandoned. This point in history, though somewhat artificial, provides an excellent opportunity for the Church to share that good news.

Is there something positive and sane that Christians should be saying as the calendar flips over to double zeros?

John Congram

Pontius' Puddle



PONTIUS' PUDDLE © Joel Kaufman

Volume CXXIII, No. 9
October 1999
ISSN 0032-7573

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Design and Production
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Circulation
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Published on the first of each month except
August by The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

The *Presbyterian Record*, national magazine of
The Presbyterian Church in Canada, is respons-
ible to the General Assembly. It exists to publish
issues relative to Christian faith and a selection of
current and timely news analyses and opinions of
interest or importance to Presbyterians across
Canada.

Member of The Canadian Church Press and
The Associated Church Press.

Publications Mail Registration No. 09634
Postage paid at Mississauga, Ontario.
Return postage guaranteed.
Send label only.

Subscription Rates
Individual: \$15
Every Home Plan (80% families subscribe): \$9
Club 50 Plan (50% families subscribe): \$11
U.S.A. and Foreign: \$20
Single Copies: \$2
All prices include GST.

Acceptance of advertising does not imply
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The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Address all correspondence and changes of
address (include label from magazine) to:

Presbyterian Record
50 Wynford Drive
Toronto, Ontario M3C 1J7
Phone: (416) 441-1111
Fax: (416) 441-2825

E-mail: pcrecord@presbyterian.ca
Web site: www.presbycan.ca/record



Nigerian Gratitude, Vision and Courage

I write this from the city of Enugu in southeastern Nigeria. This is the heartland of Nigerian Presbyterianism. Rowena and I are awed by the amazing sound of "You are welcome!" repeated everywhere we go. It is only 35 degrees in the shade. We appreciate this brief interlude from the powerful rains that play utter havoc with the roads. Travelling by car is a whole new experience — one can exercise continually by simply trying to stay in one's seat!

**The monthly
presbytery
prayer meeting
began at
8 p.m. and
finally ended
at six o'clock
the next
morning!**

Gratitude Abounds

We are overwhelmed by the sense of profound appreciation Nigerian Presbyterians have for the work of our missionaries and the sense of partnership that exists between our respective churches. We witness project after project to which Canadian Presbyterians have made financial contributions.

In Enugu, for example, we visited the Lady Ibiam (wife of the late Sir Akanu [Francis] Ibiam) Secondary School. Canadians have contributed to augment the teachers' salaries of this ecumenical school for women. It seeks to maintain affordable tuition for ordinary Nigerians along with high standards of a first-rate education as this country moves toward a new era.

In the rural area of the Ikwo people, where most families live in compounds under thatched roofs, we celebrated peace between rival groups over issues of land. Presbyterian World Service and Development gave a gift of \$5,000 to the local Peace Committee. The church saw this as a "wonderful gesture and so promises to continue its efforts to ensure a total return to lasting peace in the area." The executive chairman of the area (equivalent to our mayor) met with us personally to add his appreciation and to receive assurance of our prayers on behalf of his people.

The needs these people present to us are enormous but not overwhelming. They are people of deep faith and, therefore, of expansive vision. In the presbytery of Enugu, with its five parishes and many preaching points, the large church of St. Andrew's is the only one that has a completed building. This does not stop them from seeking to establish other churches and community services like health clinics. This same vision and faith are evident everywhere we travel.

Nigerian Life, Nigerian Time

The perspective on life we are discovering illustrates the Nigerian attitude toward time. On our first evening in Nigeria, we visited the Yaba congregation in Lagos and noted they had set up

(Continued on page 12)

Moderator's Itinerary

October 13-14
Synod of Toronto-Kingston
Toronto Korean

October 16
First Hungarian, Toronto

October 20-24
CANAAAC Conference on Debt Crisis
Jamaica

October 26-27
Synod of Southwestern Ontario
Knox, Mitchell, Ontario

October 31
150th Anniversary
Knox, Kincardine, Ontario

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Our Cover

Cover design by Tim Faller

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- Third in the series on natural church development: unwrapping your spiritual gifts
- Struggling to be a faithful Christian in Nazi Germany
- Some things parents should know before becoming parents

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Ministering to people at the end of life

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Patricia Schneider
The challenges and joys of being a senior

- 18** **Too Soon Oldt ...**
Joseph C. McLelland
The golden years?

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G. John Baergen

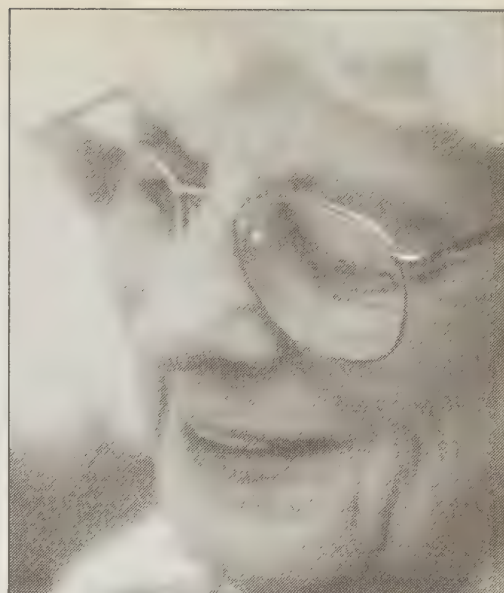
Effective leaders empower others:
#2 in the series on Natural Church Development

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Anne Lamott
The spiritual chemotherapy that popular writer Anne Lamott finds in her congregation

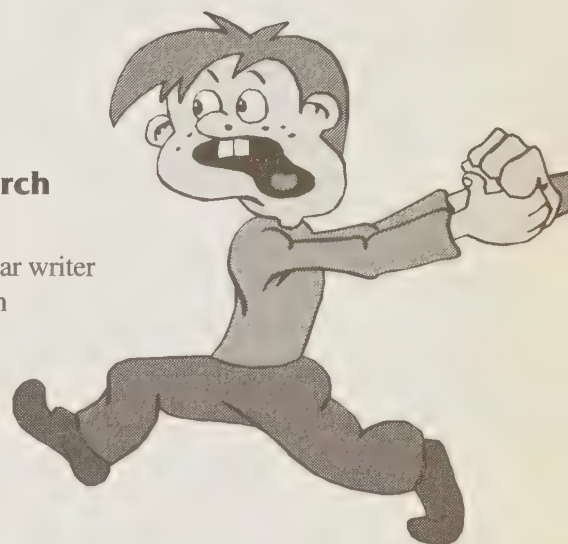
- 24** **Bob Spencer Offers Programs to Go**
Ivor Williams
Former Crieff Hills director creates a ministry to support the laity

- 27** **"God Moves in a Mysterious Way": The Hungarian Reformed Church**
William Klempa

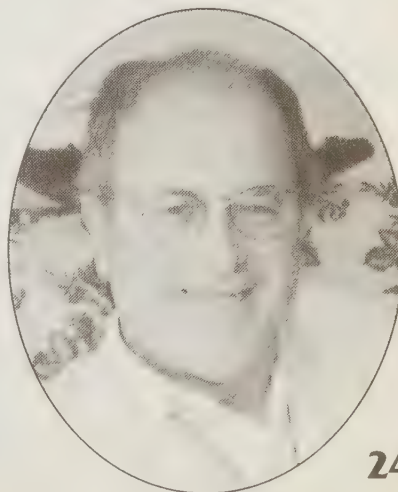
The Reformed Church in Eastern Europe demonstrates remarkable vitality



14



22



24

Missing Pages

A friend and colleague, George W. Bancroft, professor emeritus, University of Toronto, sent me a copy of "The History of the Black Church in Canada" by Denise Gillard (June *Record*). I am delighted to see it.

This effort to fill in some of the missing pages in black history over the centuries is highly commendable. Any factual information, however small, helps to correct a significant neglect of the black presence in Canadian society.

Salem Chapel in St. Catharines, Ontario, is one of the churches belonging to the Conference of The British Methodist Episcopal Church (BME) since 1856, incorporated in 1913. I am honoured to serve under its mandate at Peel Methodist Church in Mississauga, Ontario. The church in North Buxton also belongs to the BME Conference.

Thank you for including Denise Gillard's article in your magazine.

*Jean J. Burke Markham,
Mississauga, Ont.*

Misunderstanding

In the news item "Congregation Hopes Its Church Is on the Move" (June *Record*), there is an assumption that the congregation of Riverside Church, Prince William, New Brunswick, is still in existence. The fact is, the congregation was dissolved by the Presbytery of St. John on December 2, 1998. The few

surviving members were placed in the care of St. James Church, Hanwell, and the church building and remaining financial assets were transferred to the Kings Landing Historical Settlement. Kings Landing is now carrying the project to completion in consultation with the Presbytery of St. John.

The appeal for funds made in the article is an exclusive project of Kings Landing in its effort to raise sufficient funds to move the church building to its new location in the historical settlement.

*Basil Lowery, clerk,
Presbytery of
St. John, Fredericton*

Slave Redemption

Irvin Macklin (Letters, June *Record*) questions the applicability of Abraham Lincoln's words ("In giving freedom to the slave we assure freedom to the free") to slave redemption efforts in Sudan. While purchasing back slaves is controversial, it is the only means now available to extend freedom to those denied it. The article in the April *Record* addresses many underlying concerns, including any increased demand for slaves. Contrary to fears, the slave market has not grown, and may even have decreased.

Jane Roy and Glen Pearson are making every effort to bring the atrocities of

the Sudanese civil war to government and citizen attention. Pressure from the international community has the potential to bring about the eradication of slavery in Sudan. In the meantime, Christlike compassion and an abhorrence of evil must compel us to act practically on behalf of those who are powerless. The Dinka people, who instigated the slave redemption initiatives, are depending on our commitment.

*Brian Ratcliffe,
London, Ont*

Shorter letters are more likely to be published and less likely to be edited

Education in Quebec

At this year's Assembly, I heard confusion on the subject of education in Quebec. Some ministers seem to think, if they accept a call to

Quebec, their children will have to go to a French-speaking school. In most cases, this is not so. Article 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms concerns minority language rights. Under that article (as of 1982), those who received their primary school instruction in English anywhere in Canada have the right for their children to be educated in English in Quebec. This was not the way Bill 101 was originally written but — to the consternation of some Quebec nationalists — this is now the law. At the moment, Quebec's Article 59 still limits the rights of immigrants to Quebec whose mother tongue is

WATSON'S WORLD

Noel Watson



English to educate their children in English. So immigrant families from Hong Kong, the United States, Britain, Jamaica, etc., are not entitled to English education — although exemptions on various grounds are routinely made.

The moral of the story is that the bark is often worse than the bite. If you are considering the possibility of study or ministry in Quebec, don't let the education issue distract or deter you. Media reports notwithstanding, Quebec is a great place to live and educate your children. My wife and I wouldn't dream of trading Quebec's education system for Ontario's. Our boys are getting a better education in the public system than they would anywhere else in North America.

Barry Mack,
St. Lambert, Que.

Useful Resource

There is a helpful article by Bruce M. Metzger, entitled "Jehovah's Witnesses and Jesus Christ," in *Theology Today* (April 1953) in preparing for discussions with members of the Jehovah's Witnesses. This article has been reprinted as a pamphlet by The Theological Book Agency of Princeton Theological Seminary, 64 Mercer St., Princeton, N.J. 08542, U.S.A. (tel. 609-497-7735). The pamphlet costs 85 cents.

This article is a biblical and theological study of some of the major doctrines on which orthodox Christians and Jehovah's Witnesses disagree, especially the deity of Jesus Christ and the Trinity. There is an examination of the way Jehovah's Witnesses handle several of the key texts of the New Testament on the Person of Christ, and a critique of the *New World Translation* (e.g., its notorious mistranslation of John 1:1). Metzger is, of course, eminently qualified to comment on questions of Greek grammar, being one of the world's leading New Testament scholars. (By the way, Hendrickson has recently published his autobiography *Reminiscences of an Octogenarian*. It is also available from The Theological Book Agency.)

John P. Vaudry,
Wingham, Ont.

Names for God

I read in the April 1999 *Record* (Recordings) that Pope John Paul II was quoted in the *National Post* as saying the traditional patriarchal idea of God should be rejected.

I believe the idea of God should be expanded from Father to Father-Mother. My wife introduced me to a book called *Prayers of Cosmos: Meditations on the Aramaic Words of Jesus* by Neil Douglas-Klotz. One line from the Lord's Prayer in Aramaic is "Abwoon d'bwash-maya," translated by Douglas-Klotz as "O Birther! Father-Mother of the Cosmos." This translation makes me feel as if I now have a fuller and truer view of God.

Russell Benty,
Duncan, B.C.

Where Were the Women?

Of all the many photographs in the July/August issue of the *Record*, the most telling, perhaps, is that of the First General Assembly in 1875: no feminine presence is anywhere to be found. Obviously, in those dim, distant days, "dearly beloved" did not embrace women who were neither seen nor heard. Rock of ages solid, men were the sole and undisputed defenders of the faith.

Yet, seemingly, the 1875 proceedings did acknowledge the saving presence of women in the universe by closing with the hearty singing of "God Save the Queen."

Arthur E. Gregg,
Penticton, B.C.

Helping Hand

I appreciate the letter (July/August *Record*) from Linda Pearson of Fergus, Ontario, for its sentiments of giving a practical helping hand to the hog farmers. We have few hog farmers in Ottawa, but I feel guilty about not inviting poor people to share a meal with me. That would be to the point and Christian. I notice, too, how it is often the dirtiest and seediest who hold the door for me and don't let it slam in my face.

Maureen Roberts,
Ottawa

Words Challenged

I do not think James Simpson's comments about speakers at General Assembly (Recordings, July/August) ought to go unchallenged.

What to Simpson is tedious or abrasive behaviour in some commissioners may well represent to others the appropriate exercise of the responsibilities of the commission.

Brevity and clarity are not the only determinants of contributed value. And whether any contribution is "vital" or not is difficult to assess until after the fact, if at all.

Simpson's observations may strike a responsive chord in the minds of some observers. However, I question whether it is appropriate to give them general credence by publishing them.

Dennis M. Carpenter,
Fenelon Falls, Ont.

The End of Presbyterianism?

"The End of Presbyterianism," written by Joseph C. McLelland (March *Record*), moved me to write. I believe what McLelland says. In my travels to different communities of worship over the past three years, I have come to know the Lord in wonderful ways. I now read the Bible with clarity of vision. Parts that meant nothing to me are now full of God's revelations. Being a Christian is as important to my life as oxygen. I don't know how many times I have said, "I never knew that!" The Bible says it all. We really could throw away every other church document (I'm not suggesting that!) because the only way to God is through the Son, and we are clearly guided by God's Word through the Holy Spirit. We sing to our children "The Bible tells me so" — and it does.

The world has begun to set the agenda for the church as many denominations readily give in to the standards of our society. The Christian Church has been called to set the agenda for the world. Jesus left us with that mandate, and the Holy Spirit came to be our guide. I pray that Presbyterians will take Jesus' mandate to his Church seriously.

Jo-Ann McFarlane
Owen Sound, Ont.

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LETTERS

Forgiving Debts

A great milestone is about to be observed. The year 2000 will be here soon. How can Christians respond to this opportunity? The Presbyterian Church in Canada, in conjunction with its 125th anniversary that coincides with the year 2000, will sponsor a variety of services and projects.

The year 2000 is also a Jubilee year — a year of forgiveness of debt, a time for all lenders to free those in bondage for a fresh start. Scripturally based in Leviticus 25, it is also as Christ directed: "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors!"

This is a great opportunity to reflect our appreciation for our blessings by our willingness to share with many who are oppressed in the world, whose countries' debt circumstances dictate lives of servitude. I hope we will not add our voices to those in the streets, the coffee shops, the bars, the talk shows and even in our own

homes — the unforgiving attitude that has made us servants to the philosophy of lending institutions: "They borrowed, and they must pay it back."

We have heard from the lenders their offer to "delay payment of the principle." It is not in their nature to accept the fact that interest payments made to date already account for the full recovery of the original debt. Canadians should be proud that our country has taken a leadership role in offering to forgive half the debts owed to us by debtor nations. Christians should call for total forgiveness, so the poorest of the poor throughout the world do not have to continue being oppressed by past mistakes of their governments. When we are called upon to support this action with our signatures, our hearts and our voices, let us be prepared to offer forgiveness as we have been forgiven.

*Robert King,
Rodney, Ont.*

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Community of the Real Presence

John 6:41-65

On the first Sunday of October, Worldwide Communion Sunday, Christians of every size, shape, colour and language gather to eat something like a chunk of bread and drink something like a glass of wine. As “the communion of saints,” we gather with fanfare or in silence at a table that stretches beyond our expectation and imagination. Gathered together, we remember we are part of a diverse fellowship that exists across time and space.

The celebration remembers the story of Jesus and recalls that God gathered up the deep yearnings of our humanity and molded them into human form. This gathering gives thanks (Eucharist) to God for the one whose presence knit together the high hopes and deep longing of our days. It is a festival that, in ways that range from quiet and dignified to boisterous and exuberant, claims the presence of a love that does not give up on its children.

This is not a “no host” reception but a gathering that confesses an extraordinary host who is really present — a Presence spelled with a capital “P.” Ah, but what do we mean by “presence”?

John 6:41 begins with those who saw in Jesus only the carpenter’s son and not “the bread that came down from heaven.” They were not able to look past the transitory and material. They could not or would not see a Presence that speaks of a love that is deeper than deep, higher than high and stronger than all our strength.

The claim of John 6 is that the manna of Exodus is nothing compared to the heavenly bread that offers food that lasts an eternity. The “blood” and “flesh” language of the passage is disconcerting and unbiblical unless it is understood that the reference is to Communion. The passage is not an invitation to food but to rela-

tionship. The strong claim is that participation in the life of Christ (his “flesh and blood”) means participating in the fellowship that lives life that is forever (6:58).

What is meant by “real presence”? Not present with the simple meaning of “alongside.” Just because something or someone is next to you does not mean that you are present to that something or someone. You can be in a crowded elevator and have no idea of the person next to you. You can jostle or be jostled by someone on the street but that person is not necessarily present to you. You can sleep alongside someone but your heart and mind may be far away. None of this is a presence that is real.

On the other hand, you can be physically far away from another and that person may be present to you in a real way. Being present to another has something to do with shared expectations, hopes and promises. People who love may be continents apart but connected by a love that spans space and time. Real presence has to do with authentic relationships.

Presence has to do with sensitivity too. I read of an American Indian who was in noisy, crowded, downtown New York City. He turned to his friend and said, “I hear a cricket across the street.”

“A what?” his friend asked.

“A cricket.”

“Above this noise, din and clamour, you cannot possibly hear a cricket.” But his friend crossed the road and found a small bush and, behind the small bush, a small cricket.

Presence is mediated through bread and wine, but the bread and wine are not

magic. “It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless.” The bread and wine of the “real presence” have to do with our relationship to God in Christ which is, at the same time, our relationship to one another as the “Body of Christ.” The verse continues: “The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life” (6:63).

Many of the disciples found the teaching difficult (6:60); it is, in the words of one critic, “intolerable language.” A body torn and blood spilled isn’t a nice story. Pride finds it hard to

swallow! God’s gift of Jesus — bread for our hunger, wine for our thirst — isn’t always well received.

Millions of Christians gather for this Communion Sunday. Across time and territory, we join together as a wonderfully diverse people who hunger and thirst for the Real Presence. Look around the world and praise God for the community of the Real Presence. **R**

**A body torn
and blood spilled
isn’t a nice story.
Pride finds it hard
to swallow!**

For Discussion and Reflection

- Review the meaning of the manna in the desert. The references are many but found primarily in Exodus 16, Numbers 11 and Deuteronomy 8.
- What is the usual meaning of “devouring flesh”? See for example Psalm 27:2 and Zechariah 11:9.
- What were the regulations concerning the consuming of blood? See, for example, Leviticus 3:17 and Deuteronomy 12:23.
- How does being loved make a difference to you?

L. E. (Ted) Siverns is the minister of First Church in New Westminster, B.C.



The Masks We Wear

At the end of this month, someone will see Elvis Presley again. (There are, according to published reports, more authenticated sightings of a resurrected Elvis Presley than of Christ.) And, also, almost certainly, there will be sightings of Ronald Reagan, Long John Silver, Frankenstein, several dozen aliens of various kinds from outer space, and hundreds of ghosts and goblins.

The end of the month, of course, marks Halloween. It used to be All Hallows Evening, shortened to Hallows E'en. But we don't even bother with the apostrophe any more. Halloween has taken on a life of its own, entirely separate from All Hallows' Day (or All Saints' Day) from which it was originally derived. Apparently, Halloween is now second only to Christmas as a commercial festival.

It's also the only night of the year when we're allowed to acknowledge those age-old superstitions about the spirits of the dead rising from their graves to walk the earth again.

But we don't really believe that stuff, you say. It's only a children's game, you say. It's make-believe, not real-believe.

Maybe. Or, maybe, we really believe in what we do more than in what we say. Judging by the time and energy expended, which would you think people today believe in more — making lots of money or making lots of friends? Mammon, I suspect, would usually beat God. Similarly, I suspect young children are more

convinced of the reality of Santa Claus than of the child in the manger — because their adults spend much more time playing Santa than playing Christ.

Or consider this: an Angus Reid poll — one of those surveys that's supposed to be authoritative 19 times out of 20, and accurate within 2.5 per cent — has found that one in four Canadians believes there is intelligent life somewhere out there in the universe. Further, they believe those extraterrestrial beings will visit us during our lifetimes. Saskatchewan people are least likely to hold this belief; Alberta people are most likely to believe. Finally, they believe this extraterrestrial life is friendly. In California, at the time the Hale-Bopp comet was visible in the night sky in the spring of 1997, 39 people believed strongly enough in friendly extraterrestrial life that they were willing to die for their beliefs. They committed mass suicide.

Now, if that life corresponds in any way to the patterns of human history, I find any such belief highly questionable. Off hand, I can't think of any group of invaders who didn't treat the existing inhabitants with contempt, who didn't immediately attempt to subjugate and dominate them. Think of Columbus arriving in the Caribbean, Cartier landing on Gaspé, Genghis Khan storming out of the steppes of Russia or the British colonizing ancient India. Even immigrants who come with peaceful intentions have usually escaped because they had been isolated, persecuted and, ultimately, co-opted by the dominant culture.

It's roughly equivalent to cows in a feed lot believing the butcher is friendly.

It makes me wonder, sometimes, if there is intelligent life here on earth, let alone out there in outer space.

If people find it so easy to believe in alien goodwill that they know nothing about, why do they find it so hard to believe that at least one human being was

able to break the pattern of human hostility? He was able to show that loving God, loving yourself and loving your neighbour are not incompatible. Why do they find it so hard to believe God really does love them unconditionally?

I'm afraid it's because most of us who say we believe those things are more likely to talk it than to do it. Our doing reveals what we really believe.

We wear a variety of masks in our lives. We play roles as parents and children, as employers and employees, as coaches and players, as hard-hearted managers and hard-headed scientists. Tragically, I find, people are often likely to live those roles more hours a day, and more vigorously, than any roles related to their Christian beliefs. A retailer believes in market forces, a teacher believes in education, a forester believes in resource extraction ... I doubt if many of them make, say, the Trinity a dominant factor in their daily decision-making. Or the Sermon on the Mount. Let alone the vision of a New Jerusalem.

Possibly, some of those people currently classified as "seekers" might be less inclined to grasp for spiritual straws if they saw more Christians spending more time wearing the mask of Christ. **R**

Jim Taylor is a writer, editor and co-founder of Wood Lake Books.



To Replace or Not to Replace

by Rosemary Doran

The other day, I drove past a church billboard with the message "With what are you replacing God?" It brought to mind the controversy over part of the wording of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. On behalf of the Humanist Association, Svend Robinson, an NDP member of Parliament, brought a proposal to Parliament to change the wording of the preamble to the charter. The petition recommended replacing a reference to "the supremacy of God" with the phrase "the supremacy of intellectual freedom." The resultant uproar was to be expected, but the proposal provides food for reflection.

First and foremost, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms forms part of a historic continuum pertaining to our Constitution. Its reference to the founding of the nation "upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God and the rule of law" reflects the temper of the times from which Canada emerged as a nation. It was a period when the idea of God and the supremacy of God were givens — if not accepted by all, then certainly by a large majority. One newspaper editorial notes that the charter simply recognizes Canada "is founded upon a tradition that recognizes the supremacy of God [and] is based on values such as compassion, human rights, justice and freedom ... that are embedded in our sense of ethics and law and that have inspired us as a nation." On historical grounds, then, the disputed words can stand on their own.

Further, to argue, as the humanists do, that "millions" of Canadians no longer believe in God and, therefore, the words in the charter are unrepresentative does not stand up to scrutiny. The same editorial notes that not only Christians but also Jews, Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus and aboriginal peoples, among others, recognize the concept of God in some way.

Polls show faith in God is claimed by about 80 per cent of Canadians, even though not all subscribe to organized religion. To eliminate reference to God from the charter might, therefore, satisfy the vocal minority but be unfair to the views of the majority. One could claim reverse discrimination!

The root question, however, seems more properly to be not how things were then — when Canada was born — but how they are now. If we were to take God out of the charter — and, hence, out of the Constitution of which the charter is now a part — with what, in honesty, should we replace God? What is the true operating principle of our nation?

According to the humanists, it is "the supremacy of intellectual freedom." Given the record, this seems to be a shaky principle in which to put one's faith. Freedom of thought is an important matter. It has led to liberation from many tyrannies. Unfortunately, it is not always accompanied by mature attitudes and ways of relating. We may consider ourselves more progressive, more liberated in our thinking than, for example, the people of Bible times, but we certainly don't treat one another any better. A sad comment on the thousands of years that separate us from them.

If we don't want God in the Constitution, and we're not sure about intellectual freedom, we could try acknowledging the supremacy of power as the force that drives the nation. This is what it's all about in many places in our world — Yugoslavia, Northern Ireland, for example — places where the struggle for mutual recognition, respect and a peace-

ful solution is long and arduous. This is largely because such a solution involves giving up something — old grudges, ancient traditions, the power of the gun. Many people and governments operate by the creed "I am my gun." If I give it up, who am I? Power — political, mili-

tary or economic — is the inspiration and the goal in many places today, including Canada.

Or what about the supremacy of money? If we're not into freedom of the human intellect or power as motivators for society, we certainly know about the power of money — making it and keeping it, having it or not having it — and about the mind-sets

that can go with it — greed, ruthlessness, resentment, envy. Perhaps, we should be acknowledging this as a (or the) prime force in our society.

Maybe, to be honest and accurate, we should rewrite the preamble to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms as follows: "Whereas Canada was founded upon principles which, at the time, recognized the supremacy of God and the rule of law, it now operates on the principles of the supremacy of intellectual freedom, and/or power and/or money ..."

If, however, we believe this is not the appropriate Christian thing to do, that God and the supremacy of God should retain the pivotal place in our Constitution and society, we need to think through motives and implications. Leaving God in the Constitution may be an appropriate tip-of-the-hat to history. It may also make us feel good, and even righteous; but it does not make Canada a godly nation. How we live and work out

If we were to take God out of the Constitution, with what, in honesty, should we replace God?

our understanding of God in our politics, business dealings, relationships and family life is what makes Canada a godly nation.

In conclusion, let me add a few verses to the Creation story:

And God said, "Let there be a country called Canada,
a country that will extend from sea to shining sea,
a country filled with great trees and rushing rivers, mountains, lakes and prairies,
a country rich in resources and opportunities,
a country that protects the poor and welcomes the stranger,
a country where people are free to be, a country where my name and nature are honoured."

God said: "Let it be so."

The rest is up to us. **R**

Rosemary Doran is the minister of Riverside Church, Windsor, Ont.

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FROM THE MODERATOR

(Continued from page 4)

awnings around the open doors and windows of the church. This was to be the monthly presbytery prayer service. It began at 8 p.m. and finally ended at six o'clock the following morning! All night long, the loudspeakers boomed out the singing, praying and preaching (each of which was hard to distinguish from the other!) so that the surrounding community could hear from a radius of at least three city blocks.

We are learning what it means to be on Nigerian time. On our first Sunday, we travelled to Asaga, Ohafia, for a thanksgiving service. We were two hours late. Still, we managed to be present for more than half the service! This included three offerings, gathered with joy, singing and dancing.

Yesterday, our original itinerary called for us to be in Enugu at eight o'clock in the morning. For complex reasons, we did not arrive until after seven in the evening. The congregation had waited the whole day for us, spending time singing, praying and talking together. When we finally arrived, there was only concern for our long day, and they agreed to come back at eight this morning for the service. One cannot go through such an experience without thinking about how we in North America have become much too time-conscious and have lost deeper values that count for so much more before God.

Religion and Politics Intertwined

As Canadians are aware, Nigeria has experienced devastating suffering because of so many years of cruel military dictatorship. With the democratic election of a new government only a few months ago, there is a tremendous sense of hope in this nation. In this situation, The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria sees itself as having an important public role that is integral to the governing of the

nation. The church wants to help this country and its leaders recover values that will provide moral authority for lasting and creative democracy.

The thanksgiving service at Asaga was for Chief Ojo Maduekwe, a devout Christian and a strong Presbyterian, on the occasion of his appointment as federal minister of Culture and Tourism. What I found particularly remarkable was that, in the midst of celebrating this honour and responsibility, the church challenged the minister to discharge his



Rowena Van Seters with children at the thanksgiving service at Asaga.

duties as a Christian and a Presbyterian, and it spelled out what this means. In his response, the minister stated unequivocally that he is a Christian first and a minister of the government second.

Back in Lagos on August 6, we met Ian Ferguson, the Canadian high commissioner to Nigeria. The Nigerian Presbyterian Church saw this as vital to our visit because of the conviction that the church must be involved in the reconstruction of this country. We were received graciously, and the high commissioner was invited to attend part of the General Assembly if he could arrange it.

This is a church and a people who are unashamed of the gospel of Christ. They sing and dance the gospel with such joy that my own definition of what it means to be Presbyterian has been vastly expanded. Praise be to God!

Arthur Van Seters

My dear editor:

Seasons of mists and mellow fruitfulness,
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run.

— “To Autumn” by John Keats

Season of lists and synod’s uselessness,
Winding up for December’s festive run,
Thanksgiving, anniversaries, fiscal restiveness
Will we make the budget by the New Year’s gun?

— “Congregational Autumn” by Peter Plymley II

Autumn is also the season of fall fairs. Along with the Humongous Pumpkin, Piquant Pickles and Cleverest Quilt contests, I enjoy the classic car rallies that have almost become as much a fixture as all the other pastoral and bucolic goings-on.

I rejoice when I spot a '49 Hudson with the inverted bathtub look and a power plant that transported (in more ways than one) Jack Kerouac *On the Road*. There’s bound to be a doomed Edsel, a tricolour DeSoto looking like an old Vancouver Canucks uniform ... and, ah ... nostalgia sets in for a time when cars and the companies that made them had character and distinction (as well as inferior warranties). But, then, dutiful correspondent that I am, I began thinking metaphorically ...

By October, most ministers and congregations will be up and running, at least in third gear. Of course, some will still be looking for the keys and others will not have released the parking brake.

There will be the usual squabbles over programming. To what sort of station will we tune the radio: CBC Radio Two? adult contemporary?

golden oldies? teen hits? or all-talk?

Maps will be unfolded once more. Some are old, out-of-date, worn and splitting on the folds. Others are crisp and new, mostly made in the U.S.A., and impossible to refold so they will fit in our glove compartments. Some ministers and con-

gregations will avoid maps altogether, or even asking for directions, working on the philosophy that if you don’t care where you are going then you’ll never be lost.

Ministers and congregations are as variously equipped as vehicles. There are the highly tuned and tight-suspensioned, capable of 0 - 80 kilometres per hour in under 10 seconds and of handling curves at high speed, but somewhat uncomfortable over bumps and rough pavement. Others are soft-sprung, built rather for comfort, with less a feel for the road but quiet and opulent, 0 - 80 kilometres per hour ... eventually.

A few have to think of trading up — perhaps a van for the kids. More are contemplating downsizing to something more “practical” and “economic.” Some are rolling along on bald tires, rusted out and held together by faith and old coat hangers, much in need of body-filler.

Repairs used to be easier. Now, even experienced mechanics are at a loss and

must rely on computer printouts and costly new circuit boards instead of an ear that can hear and identify trouble or incremental replacements made with skilled hands.

Passengers are thrown together as on a long car trip — it can fray the nerves. There are those who want to know “Are we there yet?” or, more likely, “*Why aren’t we there yet?*” about every 10 minutes. Some are always certain that another road or another route would have been better. Others like distracting themselves with happy songs and jolly, competitive spotting games.

Drivers, often (but by no means exclusively) the minister, vary as well. There are those who are determined to get from A to B as quickly as possible, ignoring, if they can, the discomfort of those travelling with them and the rest stops or points of interest on the way. Others stick to the inside lane,

behind some trailer or mobile home and stay there, fearing to accelerate and pass even if nothing is coming toward them for miles.

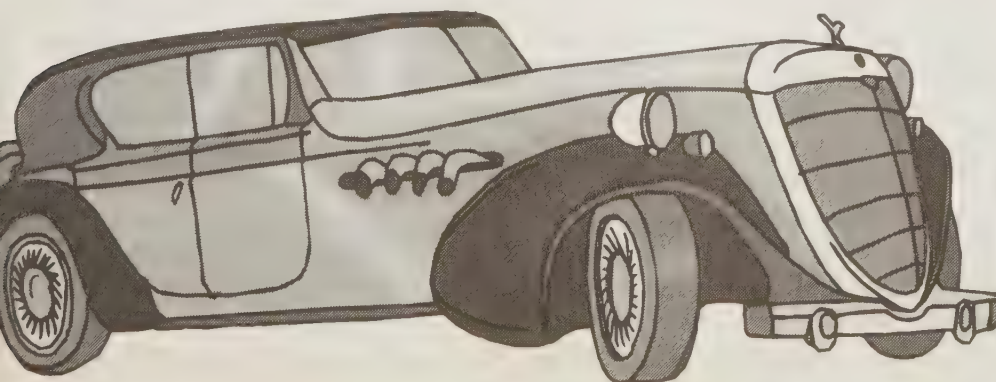
More luxurious, better and faster cars make some drivers mad. Those who drive them are arrogant, lucky incompetents whose style behind the wheel is greatly inferior to their own. If they’d only get out of the way.


Over the years, we have far fewer passengers and substantially more drivers, but no one yet is keen on car-pooling.

Well, that metaphor is about exhausted, and so am I. I have to get down to the Canadian Tire store and buy a new air freshener for the rear-view mirror (I prefer Service-Centre-Washroom Pine) and get the oil changed. I think the car will survive at least one more winter.

Yours for happy motoring,

Peter Plymley II





Caring for Our Elders

by Katherine A. Miles
and Al Miles

I was afraid when I visited my 79-year-old mother and my 82-year-old father in Arizona shortly after my mother suffered a stroke in February 1993. I feared she would look so different I wouldn't even recognize her. I thought her mouth would be twisted and she would be unable to sit up straight. I wondered if she would be able to speak. My greatest fear was she would not recognize me. Thank God, she knew me right away. We hugged and kissed as always.

But the stroke had seriously disabled Mother. Her right side was paralysed. When she tried to eat, the food fell out of her mouth onto a bib or the floor. She looked so pathetic she reminded me of a helpless, sick child.

I attempted to discuss "normal" things, the way my mother and I had always done. Her eyes lit up when I talked about Hawaii, my new home state, a place she'd always dreamt of visiting. And she loved stories about my siblings' children as well as photographs of our family.

I was hopeful Mother would regain some of her skills. I had a difficult time facing the possibility of her living in a nursing home and being wheelchair-bound for the rest of her life.

Mother kept asking, "Why did this have to happen to me?" I didn't know what to say. I feared she would ask an even harder question, "Why can't you take me to Hawaii to live with you?" As much as I loved my mother, I didn't want her living with me. I enjoyed my privacy.

After flying home, I felt relieved. I didn't have to sit with my mother and feel

hopeless. But I was never free from guilt. I felt as if I had abandoned my own child. Knowing my father was with her gave me some peace of mind. But things got worse. In September of that year, Daddy died of kidney cancer, 12 days after being diagnosed. All the administrative matters I'd been helping him with suddenly became my responsibility because I was my mother's power of attorney.

I had to try to care for my mother from 3,000 miles away. Instead of being present with her, I tried to help her by completing practical tasks like selling her trailer and filling out forms. I lost my willingness to talk honestly with her, the woman who was once one of my closest confidantes. I tried to avoid any topic that would draw attention to my mother's declining health or to my guilty sense that I had abandoned her.

But we did begin to tell each other directly that we loved each other. We hadn't talked like this before. Even after her speech became garbled, the phrase "I love you" was crystal clear. It meant the world to me to hear that. I felt forgiven for abandoning her.

The last time my mother and I had an enjoyable time together was June 1995 when my husband and I flew to Arizona to be with her and celebrate his birthday. After dinner, we put on party hats and sang "Happy Birthday" to Al. Mother loved the entire celebration. Forgotten for that moment were the nursing home,

the bland diet and her loneliness. At night, I'd sit or lie next to her in bed, holding her undamaged hand while stroking her hair. The peace was not disturbed by nurses drawing blood from her finger or forcing pills down her throat.

I called Mother in October on my birthday. She sounded awful and told me she wasn't feeling well. A few days later, one of her nurses called to tell me Mother was refusing to eat. I decided to visit right away. By the time I arrived, my mother was lying on a gurney in the emergency

room of the county hospital. She was suffering from severe dehydration and decreased consciousness, and she was emaciated and ashen. When she looked at me, my worst fear was realized — she did not recognize me.

I had travelled 3,000 miles to care for my mother, but she didn't even know me. I was crushed. The thought crossed my mind that, perhaps, she had recognized me but was angry because I had abandoned her.

Three days later, as I was about to return to Hawaii, mother gave me a gift that made the trip worthwhile. She looked up at me and offered a big smile of recognition. I was so happy — but sad, too, because she would be aware of my leaving her once again.

Three weeks later, I returned to Arizona and received another devastating blow. Mother looked weak and confused. She made no gestures or sounds that indi-

A grieving daughter and a pastor offer advice

cated she knew me. The place in her brain that allowed her to smile so brightly at me less than a month earlier was gone.

"I am your daughter; you are my mother!" I screamed in her ear. I got no response, only a slapping gesture from her secured hand. She even tried to pinch and bite me. This was not my mother. She had lashed out at the people who poked, prodded and cleaned her, but never at me. I returned to Hawaii brokenhearted, knowing my mother would never recognize me again.

On February 13, 1996, a nurse called and asked me to consider stopping the antibiotic injections. She believed Mother was suffering now.

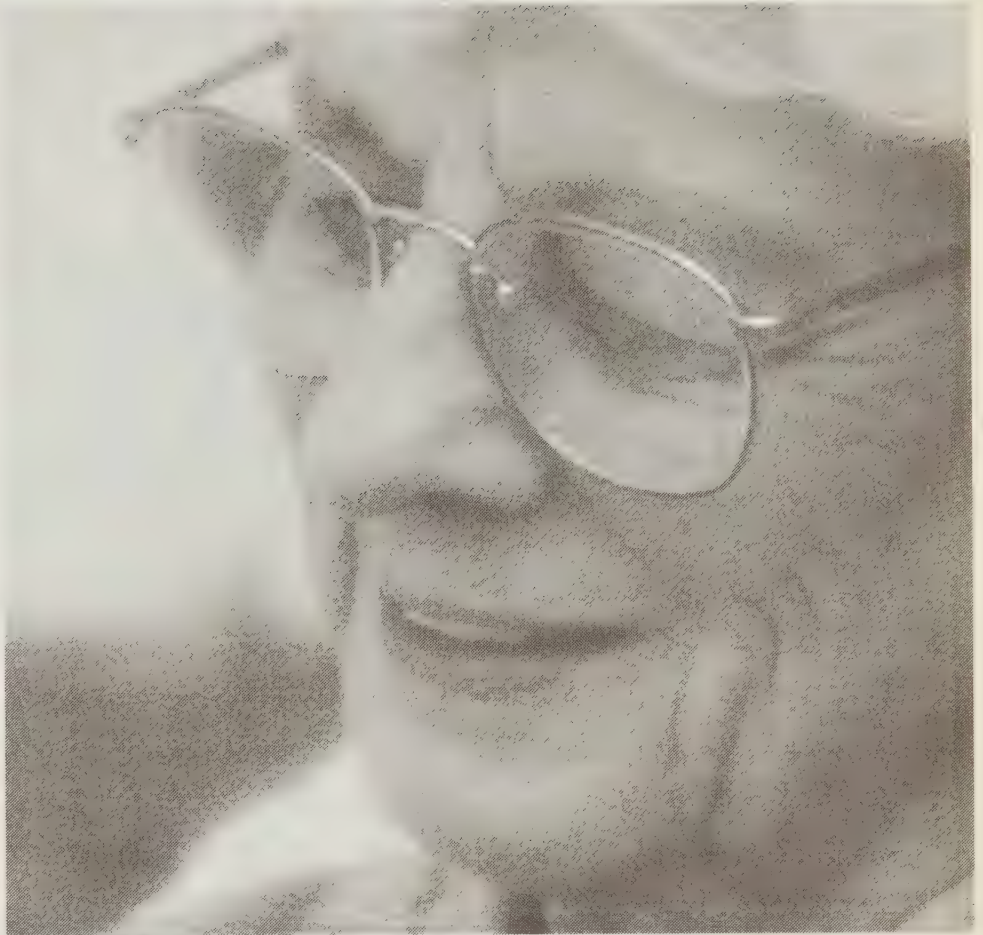
I sought the advice of family members and friends, but mother's wishes were all I really desired. From across the miles, I wondered: "Mother, please tell me what you want! What shall I do for you now?"

I chose to continue all treatment. I reasoned Mother knew she was dying and, perhaps, she would appreciate time to reflect upon her life. I prayed she would feel my love. Less than 48 hours later, a nurse called to inform me Mother had died peacefully. Her long struggle had finally ended.

My mother lost so much in the final three years of her life — her husband, health, home, dignity and the freedom to make her own choices. Perhaps, she would never have made the choices we made for her in her last days.

Mother lives on inside of me. I think of her every day and dream of her often. I'm sad that I can't call, write or visit. But we talk all the time. I tell her that I love her and she replies in the sweet voice I've known all my life, "I love you, too."

Kathy's reflections on her feelings about her mother's illness and death raise many of the core issues of aging. Not everyone who lives to an old age will undergo the emotional, physical and spiritual devastation that Grace suffered. But most elderly people will experience a multitude of losses.



To age is to grieve. As we grow older, a number of life's joys diminish or are lost entirely: good health, loving family members and friends, good eyesight and hearing, strong sex drive, and the freedom to live, play and work where we choose. In the midst of these and other catastrophic changes, seniors and their loved ones frequently seek emotional and spiritual support from their parish pastors or chaplains in hospitals and long-term care facilities. Here are some insights I've gained from the elderly and their loved ones in my career as a hospital chaplain.

Be long on listening and short on words. Many senior citizens and their loved ones are dealing with complicated issues such as guilt, shame, forgiveness, reconciliation, saying goodbye, and the meaning of life after death. Although they may occasionally need encouragement, feedback, prayer and words of Scripture from us, most often they need us to listen silently to their many stories.

Avoid trite phrases. Some well-meant statements can discount or minimize people's honest struggles. Some imply it is sinful or wrong to grieve. We may also unintentionally exacerbate people's feelings of abandonment and isolation. Phrases such as the following can block expression of true feelings:

"You've lived a good, long life. Rejoice over the fact that you'll soon be with God."

"We mustn't grieve as others do who have no hope."

"In all things, God works together for good."

"God will never give you more than you can handle at one time."

"Don't be sad about your mother's death. After all, you had her with you for a number of years."

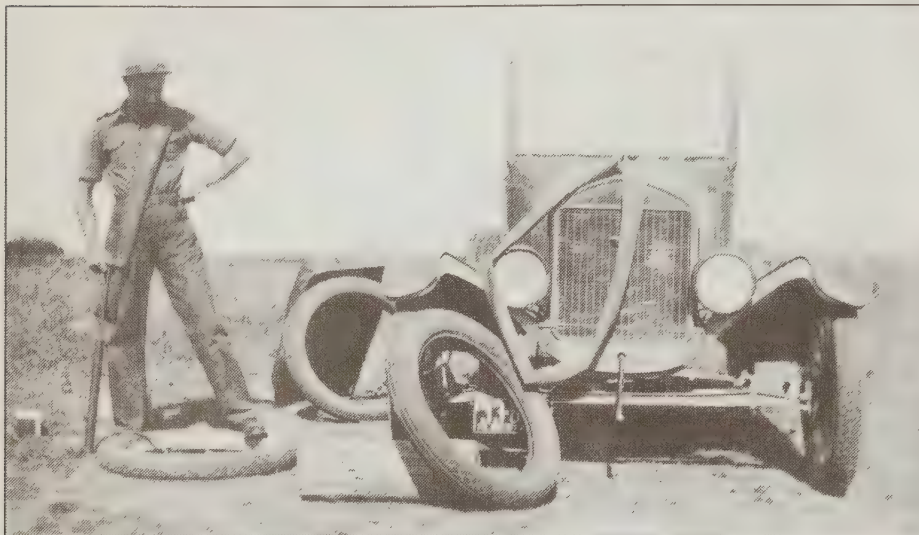
"You must forgive your father before he dies. This will please God."

"Over time, you'll forget all the pain your mother suffered and think only



Guideposts

Celebrating Our Heritage



Rev. Norman McMillan making his rounds in the student charge of Standoff and McBride Lake, Alberta, during the Hungry '30s. He had the use of a Model T Ford while ministering to his scattered flock.

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about the good times you had together."

"It is appointed for men and women to die, and after that comes the judgment."

Keep focused on their needs. Bringing in stories about other people, whether personal or professional in nature, could take the focus of our care away from the people we are talking to at the moment. They may feel we are devaluing their situation.

Allow plenty of time for a visit. Senior citizens, especially those confined to a long-term care facility, home or hospital, are often bored. They need people to hear their many life experiences. Abruptly ended or short visits run the risk of heightening feelings of isolation.

Speak directly to the person. Seniors often have diminished eyesight and hearing. Speaking to them from behind or while not looking them directly in the face can block lines of communication. While it is not necessary to yell (this sometimes frightens or annoys older people), it is vital to speak in a deep tone while maintaining good eye contact.

Be sensitive with touch. Seniors have many aches and pains. What might seem like a soothing stroke to us could feel like a blow to them.

Watch your tone and words. Some people tend to speak to older people, especially those who are ill, the same way they might talk to an infant or pet. Some also take liberties with words of address. "Honey," "Dearie" and "Sweetheart" may be appropriate for those with whom we share an intimate relationship, but they are condescending when addressing others.

Senior citizens and their loved ones have much to teach us about life, illness and the dying process. They also help to increase our sensitivity as we minister to people of all ages. It is therefore imperative that we remain open to all the wisdom they have to share. **R**

Katherine A. Miles is a free-lance writer and photographer in Honolulu. Al Miles is a *Christian Ministry* editorial adviser. He serves as co-ordinator of hospital ministry with Inter-faith Ministries of Hawaii at the Queen's Medical Center in Honolulu. This article, first published in *The Christian Ministry*, is reprinted by permission of the authors © 1997 by Katherine A. Miles and Al Miles.

The Waiting Years

by Patricia Schneider

Getting my old age pension recently was a mixed blessing. As much as I enjoy the financial benefits, I recognize I have reached a formidable crossroads in my life.

Some time ago, an English comedy called *Waiting for God* was shown on TV. It amused many of us. Strangely, I'm finding I've become a character in the less-than-fictionalized enactment of the series. It's an interesting role.

Most of the characters in my real-life play are dear, old friends, seemingly no different from years ago. But, now, more frequently, there are incidents of crisis — the loss of a spouse, a debilitating illness or placement in a different residence.

It takes courage and adaptability. But these folks lived through the Great Depression and the Second World War. They're sturdy stuff. And nothing is taken for granted. Each day is a gift of family and friends, and each evening is a welcome rest.

Seniors watch in amazement as their children grow old before their eyes. Grandchildren mirror memories of years long past.

"Can you teach me how to swing?" my grandson asks about the recent dance craze.

"Sure," I reply, "if my old hip will let me."

And "Do you believe in abortion?" and "What about predestination?" Pretty heavy questions this 16-year-old asks. He

still believes I have answers. For years, I have taken lighter questions seriously.

As he grows, we seem to shrink. We seniors joke about our trivial lapses of memory and the not-so-trim waistlines we now sport. We are a more mellow version of our 40s and 50s. A game of bridge or whist may bring out the competitive edge we once sharpened in our youth, but most of us laugh more easily now. We've put away petty, childish things.

My neighbour across the street announces that Parkinson's is now on his list of ailments. When he complained, his doctor replied, "Old age is not for

sissies." And you don't meet many sissies. I join their ranks with trepidation. Can I be as brave? Will I handle my senior years with the same grace and sense of humour?

At a recent Sunday service, the minister looked across the sea of grey and bald heads. He reassured us we still have value. "You can still pray. You can still witness. You can still be faithful."

As the days blend one into another, I recall her sermon. It is both a challenge and an assurance. Being 65 still has a lot going for it. **R**

Patricia Schneider is a free-lance writer living in Grande Prairie, Alta.

**"Old age
is not
for sissies"**



Too Soon Oldt ...

by Joseph C. McLelland

I've liked Betty Friedan ever since her *Feminine Mystique* (1963) anticipated the '70s movement. In a more recent book, *The Fountain of Age*, she calls seniors to speak for themselves (down with gerontologists!) and rewrite the experience of aging.

I agree: "retirement" means retiring from the job, not from life. Only from monetary employment — not from the fullness of living or the productivity of friendship, service and "being there."

And now that un-employment is the lifestyle of so many of all ages, we can share our busy pace with them — showing the way to personal meaning and wholeness with or without a position in the "work-place."

An indirect witness comes from philosophy. As Socrates was about to drink the fatal hemlock in an Athenian prison, he said, "True philosophers are always occupied in the practice of dying" and, so,

"to them least of all is death terrible." He means this

world is not the

"real" world, the

eternal truths

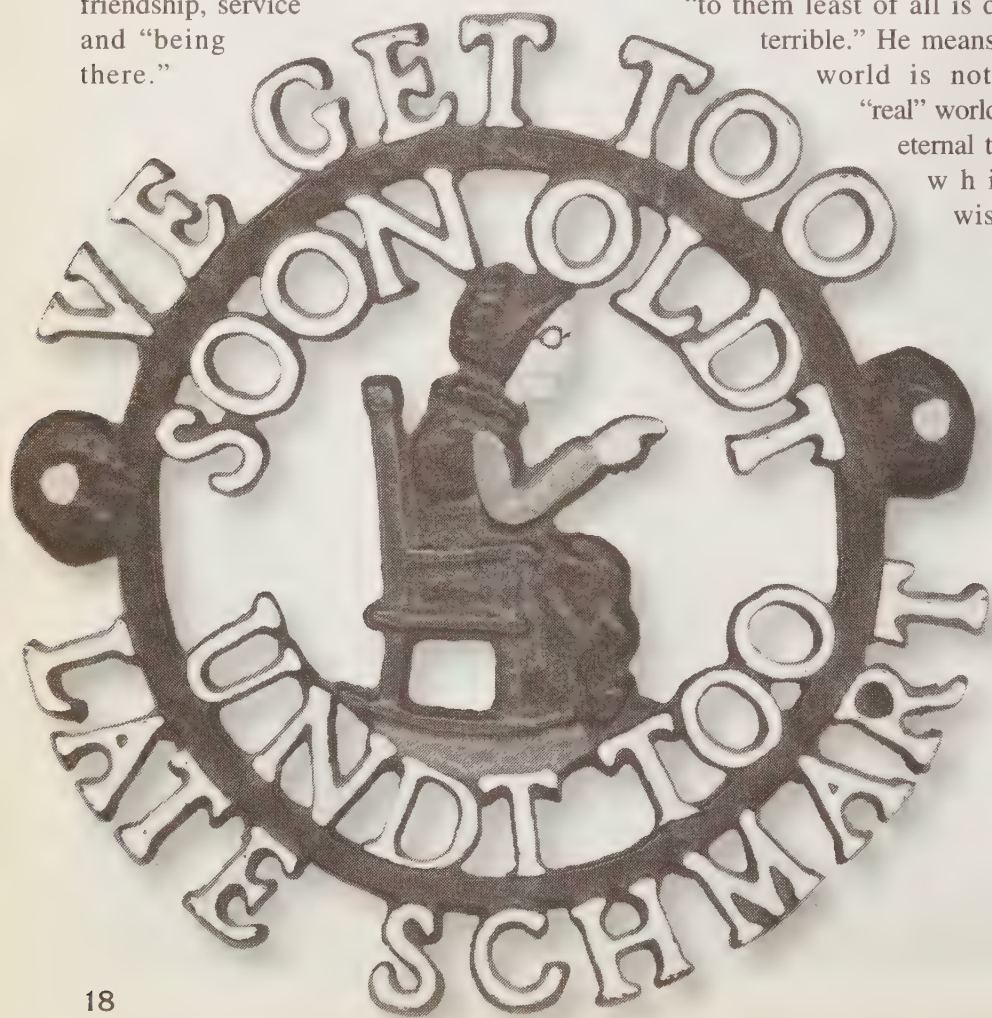
which

wisdom

knows. (Science mirrors this passing world and so is an inferior discipline; it gains mere knowledge, never wisdom.) Philosophers know this truth and, therefore, live in such a way as to deny the claims of world and body, preparing for their liberation through death.

Christians accept this priority given to eternity over time, but reject the devaluing of earthly existence. We know it is God's creation, good and positive. We accept science as well as philosophy. But we also know that God's Rule is far from obvious in the world and, therefore, we, too, teach a kind of dying to sin and selfishness as if the future Reality has already begun.

During the persecution of the third century, the Christian "Father" Cyprian of Carthage wrote many letters to those imprisoned or exiled or else suffering from widespread disease in the Middle East and North Africa. He exhorted "soldiers of Christ" to reflect on dying and living: "They cannot be conquered, but can die; and by this very fact are they invincible, that they do not fear death." He also said not to wear black for mourning here since the dead already wear white there. Two centuries later, Augustine remarked in his *Confessions*: "I know not whence I came hither into this life-in-death. Or should I call it death-in-life? I don't know. Yet the consolations of your mercy have sustained me from the very beginning." The old prayer book phrase was "In the midst of life, we are in death." Shouldn't Christians turn it around? "In the midst of death, we are in



life." The consolations of God's mercy sustain us through the assaults of evil, the attempts of Death to rob this good creation of its grace notes of abundant and eternal life.

Long ago, the great Athenian orator Pericles, in his funeral oration over those killed in the tragic Peloponnesian War, stated: "One's sense of honour is the only thing that does not grow old; and the last pleasure when one is worn out with age, as the poet said, is not making money but having the respect of one's fellows."

Honour, respect — simple virtues not easily understood by the young. To be young is to be seized by passion (the very word comes from "passive"), swayed by emotions that yield a black-and-white vision of the world. If we mellow through age, is it because we grow weary or cau-

If we mellow through age, is it because we grow weary, or cautious or cynical? Perhaps; but, mainly, because we see things in a wider horizon

tious or cynical? Perhaps; but, mainly, because we see things in a wider horizon, the background filled with experiences we couldn't amass while younger. Then, we lived in the foreground of reality; now, we know the depths plumbed through suffering much and loving more. (That's why we choose to govern our churches through "elders.")

"Ve get too soon oldt," as the Amish saying goes, "undt too late schmart." But it's not the smarts that count in the long run. Nay, rather, there is a wisdom beyond knowledge available to all ages that begins in "the fear of the Lord" — that awesome impress of grace we call faith. And it ends in renewal and rejuvenation; for it has a youthening power, as the Eternal bathes our mortality in perpetual youth. Despite our losses, our pains and our afflictions, and because of the Gospel, we seniors may celebrate aging as the coming of *l'Age d'Or*, the golden years. **R**

Joseph McLelland is emeritus professor of McGill University and The Presbyterian College, Montreal, and a contributing editor of this magazine.



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The Art of Effective Leadership

by G. John Baergen

#2 in the series on natural church development

Jesus, our master leader, spent his ministry years making disciples. He understood that making disciples results in the natural growth of God's Kingdom. In his leadership role, Jesus didn't do it all. He chose to empower his followers. Rather than withholding miraculous powers, he gave them away. Tax collectors and fishermen became people filled with his power. Jesus defines empowering leadership.

Effective leadership must be empowering leadership. No leader can *do it all*. That is a fundamental misunderstanding, fuelled by the larger-than-life presence of leaders who appear to be doing it all *and* appear to be successful. However, a long view of these "effective" leaders suggests they are building magnificent organizations that rise for a time. These leaders hold power and authority. They are empowered. Their organizations and ministries, dynamic for a time, die with the leader. How different the empowering leader whose dynamic ministry centres not on empire-building but on "equipping, supporting, motivating and mentoring individuals, enabling them to become all that God wants them to be."

So what differentiates the empowering leader from the empowered leader? Author and researcher Christian A. Schwarz puts it this way:

Empowered leaders hold authority; empowering leaders give it away.

Empowered leaders "do it all"; empowering leaders enable others to do ministry effectively.

Empowered leaders retain authority; empowering leaders delegate, disciple and multiply.

Empowered versus empowering is more than mere semantic preference. Empowering leaders are instrumental in building the future. Heavily investing in others, their impact is widespread. These leaders do not work to craft a ministry that will feed their own esteem; they understand who God created them to be. Understanding their giftedness, they value interdependence. Less charismatic in presentation, empowering leaders are fulfilled through the growth of others and in the development of the vision they know to be bigger than themselves.

This is a comfort: a successful leader doesn't have to do it all. In fact, a successful, effective leader *shouldn't* do it all. Schwarz writes, "Most of the pastors with the highest scores in our survey are little known."

So, first and foremost, empowering leaders have a sharply developed under-

Empowering leaders equip, support, motivate and mentor others

standing of who they are. This allows them to draw upon others to round out their leadership, maximizing everyone's gifts. From that basis, the leader empowers others to experience growth. The empowering leader under-

stands multiplication and rigorously avoids building a personal kingdom. The laity are vital to effective leadership.

Finally, an empowering leader will readily accept help from outside sources. Schwarz found this factor to have the strongest correlation to the overall quality and growth of a church. This is the exciting discovery for all leaders. According to Schwarz, "There is no other minimum factor where such rapid progress can be made in a relatively short time frame." Every leader, when practising empowering leadership, can make a profound impact. Theirs will be effective leadership. In the words of Jesus, our master leader, "Go therefore and make disciples" (Matthew 28:19). That is the true art of effective leadership. **R**

John Baergen is executive director and chief executive officer of the International Centre for Leadership Development and Evangelism in Winfield, B.C.; 1-800-804-0777.

For Discussion and Reflection

by Jim Czegledi

People expect their leaders to lead. But how?

Canadian Presbyterians believe all ministries of the church proceed from and are sustained by Jesus Christ. It follows, therefore, that leadership comes from Christ and is entrusted to leaders. Leadership that is true to the theology and practice of our denomination is exercised by leaders guided by the Spirit through the courts, councils and committees of the church. This implies the church is a team, not individuals. It is a community of contributors. The question of leadership is, to what are they contributing? Can the leaders present a clear vision?

Jesus empowered his followers to become disciples. He accomplished this with a clear vision of the Kingdom of God and its goals. Leadership is always tested against the church's goals, focus and objectives. Another question is, will leadership help us achieve these goals?

Empowering leadership recognizes and nurtures the spiritual gifts of others in working toward a common goal. These leaders share in the creation and implementation of a vision or purpose. Church leaders often believe the myth that the less leadership they offer, the better equipped Christians will be. However, the opposite is true. As Tom Bandy, Canadian church consultant says, "Church leaders are called to risk popularity and social status in order to empower others to envision, birth and nurture the God-given potential that is within them."

This style of leadership includes all leaders in the church — lay, elders and clergy, and those in both formal and informal capacities. Empowering leadership includes such qualities as personal integrity, trustworthiness, good communication skills, practicality and the ability to take initiative. It is also essential to have the ability to motivate

others, train or mentor others, manage diversity, embrace change, and handle the anxiety and frustration often projected on a leader.

The attitudes that foster empowering leadership in the church include:

- ability to exercise leadership
- willingness to try new things and to be open to change
- ability to tolerate criticism for leadership decisions
- willingness to learn new skills
- high energy
- priority on ministering to people rather than on maintaining the institution
- willingness to allow new people into major power positions.

Compare your leadership qualities and attitudes with those described above and in the list John Baergen provides.


Consider the obstacles to empowering leadership mentioned above. Do you face any of these? What steps can you take to eliminate these obstacles?

What is unique in your situation?

For more reading on how change can happen in a congregation and in developing the leadership skills required to introduce positive change, the following books are helpful:

Building Spiritual Redwoods by William Easum and Thomas Bandy (Abingdon Press, 1997)

Unlocking Church Doors by Paul Munday (Abingdon, 1997).

For more information on these and other related resources, visit the evangelism Web page at www.presbyterian.ca/evangelism. 

Jim Czegledi is associate secretary of evangelism, church growth and worship of the Life and Mission Agency of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

He's older

now and can no longer do the heavy construction work he's done in the past. So he's decided to look for other work. Last week, he came to the thrift shop and purchased a jacket, pants, white shirt, tie and overcoat. He applied for a job as a security guard, but an old conviction for drunk driving prevented him from getting it. We referred him to an agency that can help clear his record. He's a worthwhile person and we know that his six loving children would say the same. He dries the tears that have been pouring down his cheeks — and thanks us for simply listening.

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Why I Make Sam

Sam is the only kid he knows who goes to church — who is made to go to church two or three times a month. He rarely wants to. This is not exactly true: the truth is he *never* wants to go. What young boy would rather be in church on the weekends than hanging out with a friend? It doesn't help him to be reminded that once he's there he enjoys himself, that he gets to spend the time drawing in the little room outside the sanctuary, that he only actually has to sit still and listen during the short children's sermon. It does not help that I always pack some snacks, some Legos, his art supplies, and bring along any friend of his whom we can lure into our churchy web. It does not help that he genuinely cares for the people there. All that matters to him is that he alone among his colleagues is forced to spend Sunday morning in church.

You might think, noting the bitterness, the resignation, that he was being made to sit through a six-hour Latin mass. Or you might wonder why I make this strapping, exuberant boy come with me most weeks, and if you were to ask, this is what I would say.

I make him because I can. I outweigh him by nearly seventy-five pounds.

But that is only part of it. The main reason is that I want to give him what I found in the world, which is to say a path and a little light to see by. Most of the people I know who have what I want — which is to say, purpose, heart, balance, gratitude, joy — are people with a deep sense of spirituality. They are people in community, who pray, or practise their faith; they are Buddhists, Jews, Christians — people banding together to work on themselves and for human rights. They follow a brighter light than the glimmer of their own candle; they are part of something beautiful. I saw something once from the Jewish Theological Seminary that said, "A human life is like a single letter of the alphabet. It can be meaningless. Or it can be a part of a great meaning." Our funky little church is filled with people who are working for peace and freedom, who are out there on the

streets and inside praying, and they are home writing letters, and they are at the shelters with giant platters of food.

When I was at the end of my rope, the people at St. Andrew tied a knot in it for me and helped me hold on. The church became my home in the old meaning of *home* — that it's where, when you show up, they have to let you in. They let me in. They even said, "You come back now."

My relatives all live in the Bay Area and I adore them, but they are all as skittishly self-obsessed as I am, which I certainly mean in the nicest possible way. Let's just say that I do not leave family

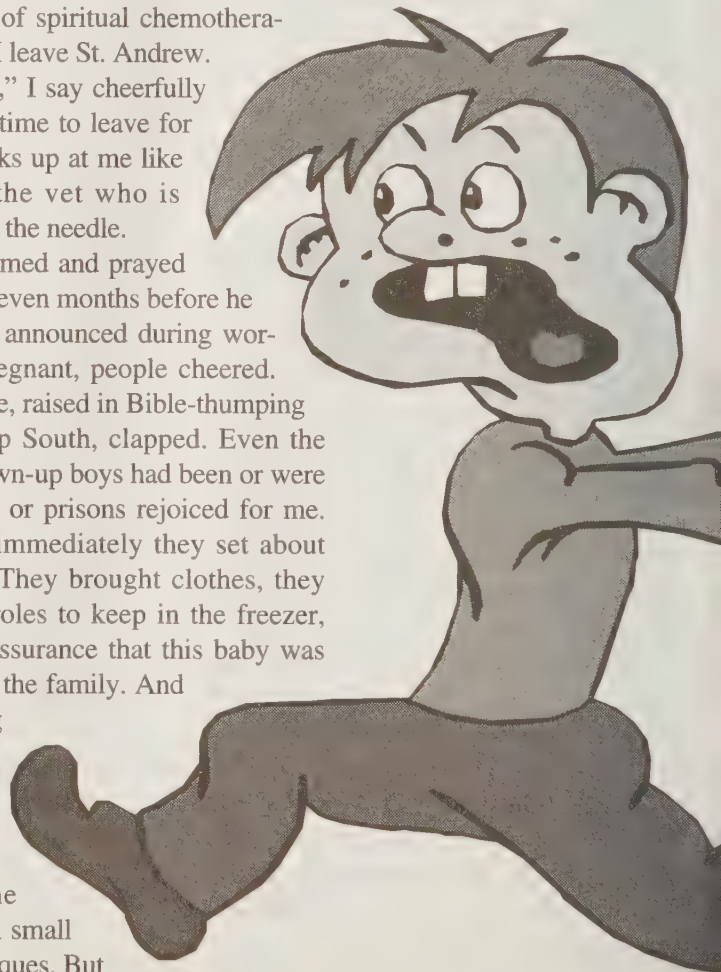
gatherings with the feeling that I have just received some kind of spiritual chemotherapy. But I do when I leave St. Andrew.

"Let's go, baby," I say cheerfully to Sam when it is time to leave for church, and he looks up at me like a puppy eyeing the vet who is standing there with the needle.

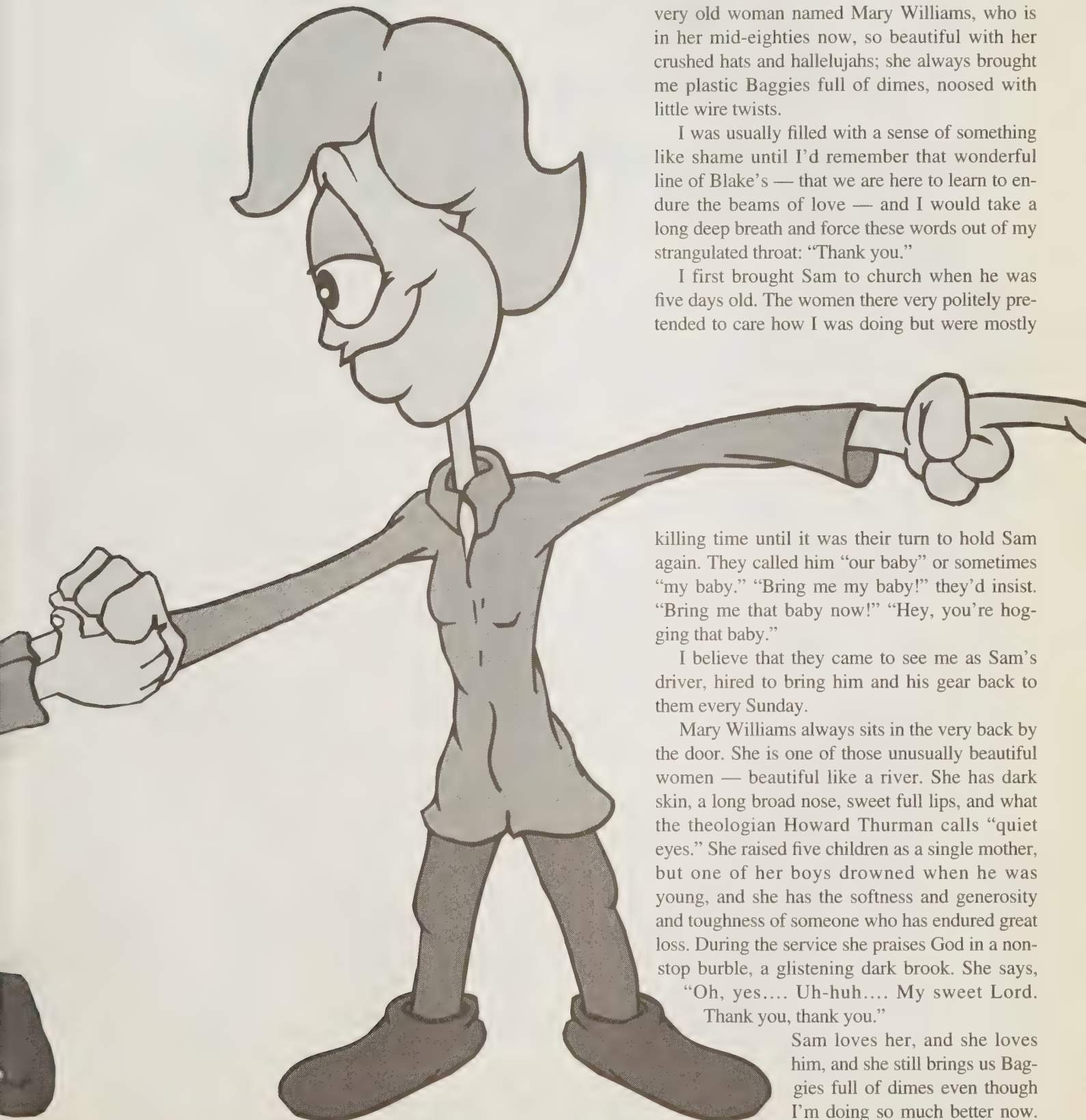
Sam was welcomed and prayed for at St. Andrew seven months before he was born. When I announced during worship that I was pregnant, people cheered. All these old people, raised in Bible-thumping homes in the Deep South, clapped. Even the women whose grown-up boys had been or were doing time in jails or prisons rejoiced for me. And then almost immediately they set about providing for us. They brought clothes, they brought me casseroles to keep in the freezer, they brought me assurance that this baby was going to be part of the family. And they began slipping me money.

Now, a number of the older black women live pretty close to the bone financially on small Social Security cheques. But routinely they sidled up to me and stuffed bills in my pocket — tens and twenties. It was always done so stealthily that you might have

A compelling reason to make your children go to church



Go to Church *by Anne Lamott*



thought they were slipping me bindles of cocaine. One of the most consistent donors was a very old woman named Mary Williams, who is in her mid-eighties now, so beautiful with her crushed hats and hallelujahs; she always brought me plastic Baggies full of dimes, noosed with little wire twists.

I was usually filled with a sense of something like shame until I'd remember that wonderful line of Blake's — that we are here to learn to endure the beams of love — and I would take a long deep breath and force these words out of my strangled throat: "Thank you."

I first brought Sam to church when he was five days old. The women there very politely pretended to care how I was doing but were mostly

killing time until it was their turn to hold Sam again. They called him "our baby" or sometimes "my baby." "Bring me my baby!" they'd insist. "Bring me that baby now!" "Hey, you're hogging that baby."

I believe that they came to see me as Sam's driver, hired to bring him and his gear back to them every Sunday.

Mary Williams always sits in the very back by the door. She is one of those unusually beautiful women — beautiful like a river. She has dark skin, a long broad nose, sweet full lips, and what the theologian Howard Thurman calls "quiet eyes." She raised five children as a single mother, but one of her boys drowned when he was young, and she has the softness and generosity and toughness of someone who has endured great loss. During the service she praises God in a non-stop burble, a glistening dark brook. She says, "Oh, yes.... Uh-huh.... My sweet Lord. Thank you, thank you."

Sam loves her, and she loves him, and she still brings us Baggies full of dimes even though I'm doing so much better now.

Every Sunday I nudge Sam in her direction, and he walks to where she is sitting and hugs her. She smells him behind his ears, where he most smells like sweet unwashed new potatoes. This is in fact what I think God may smell like, a young child's slightly dirty neck. Then Sam leaves the sanctuary and returns to his drawings, his monsters, dinosaurs, birds.

said he wished we'd all get hit by a car, and Josh stared out the window nonchalantly. I thought he might be about to start humming. It was one of those times when you wish you were armed so you could attack the kid who has hurt your own child's feelings.

"Sam?" I asked. "Can I help in any way? Shall we pray?"

And a moment later, he changed his mind. Now, maybe this was the result of prayer, or forgiveness; maybe it was a coincidence. I will never know. But even before Josh changed his mind, I did know one thing for sure, and this was that Sam and I would be going to church the next morning. Mary Williams would be sitting in the back near the door, in a crumpled hat. Sam would hug her; she would close her eyes and smell the soft skin of his neck, just below his ears.

What I didn't know was that Josh would want to come with us too. I didn't know that when I stopped by his house to pick up Sam the next morning, he would eagerly run out ahead of Sam to ask if he could come. And another thing I didn't know was that Mary Williams was going to bring us another bag of dimes. It had been a little while since her last dime drop, but just when I think we've all grown out of the ritual, she brings us another stash. Mostly I give them to street people. Some sit like tchotchkes on bookshelves around the house. Mary doesn't know that professionally I'm doing much better now; she doesn't know that I no longer really need people to slip me money. But what's so dazzling to me, what's so painful and poignant, is that she doesn't bother with what I think she knows or doesn't know about my financial life. She just knows we need another bag of dimes, and that is why I make Sam go to church. **R**

From the book *Traveling Mercies: Some Thoughts on Faith* by Anne Lamott (Pantheon, 1999, \$32). Reprinted with permission.

"I want to give him what I found in the world, which is to say a path and a little light to see by"

I watch Mary Williams pray sometimes. She clutches her hands together tightly and closes her eyes most of the way so that she looks blind; because she is so unself-conscious, you get to see someone in a deeply interior pose. You get to see all that intimate resting. She looks as if she's holding the whole earth together, or making the biggest wish in the world. Oh, yes, Lord. Uh-huh.

It's funny: I always imagined when I was a kid that adults had some kind of inner toolbox, full of shiny tools: the saw of discernment, the hammer of wisdom, the sandpaper of patience. But then when I grew up I found that life handed you these rusty bent old tools — friendships, prayer, conscience, honesty — and said, Do the best you can with these, they will have to do. And mostly, against all odds, they're enough.

Not long ago I was driving Sam and his friend Josh over to Josh's house where the boys were going to spend the night. But out of the blue, Josh changed his mind about wanting Sam to stay over. "I'm tired," he said suddenly, "and I want to have a quiet night with my mom." Sam's face went white and blank; he has so little armour. He started crying. I tried to manipulate Josh into changing his mind, and I even sort of vaguely threatened him, hinting that Sam or I might cancel a date with *him* some time, but he stayed firm. After a while Sam

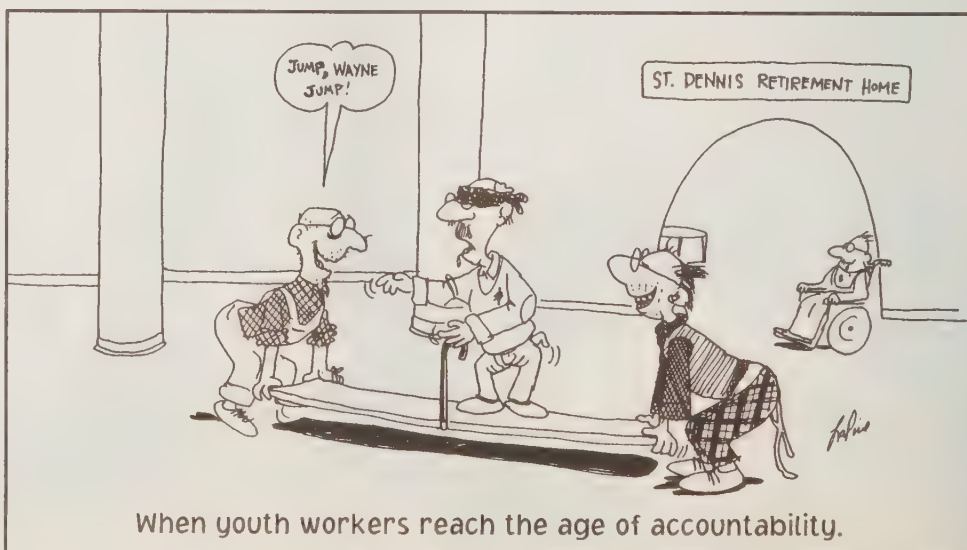
"I just wish I'd never been born."

But after a moment, he said yes, I should pray. To myself.

So I prayed that God would help me figure out how to stop living in the problem and to move into the solution. That was all. We drove along for a while. I waited for a sign of improvement. Sam said, "I guess Josh wishes I had never been born."

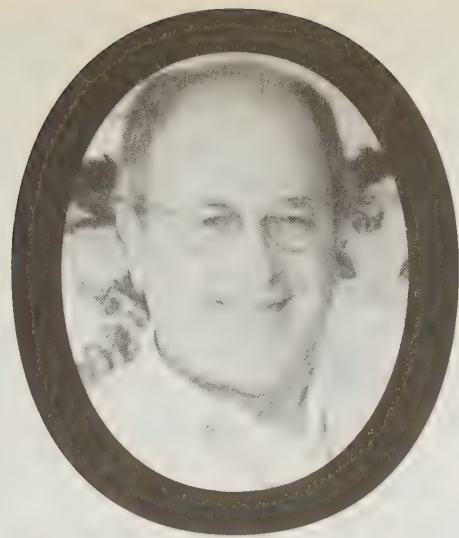
Josh stared out the window: dum de dum.

I kept asking God for help, and after a while I realized something — that Josh was not enjoying this either. He was just trying to take care of himself, and I made the radical decision to let him off the hook. I imagined gently lifting him off the hook of my judgment and setting him back on the ground.



When youth workers reach the age of accountability.

Bob Spencer



Offers Programs

Rev. Robert Spencer is changing direction after almost 25 years of directing the Crieff Hills Community (including its early years when he was the only staff member) and being its manager, fixer, fund raiser and spiritual leader. He sees no conflict now in taking his experience to any place people need it when they are unable to travel to Crieff. (Crieff is situated in Puslinch, Ontario, a rural area between the cities of Hamilton and Kitchener, close to Highway 401.)

"I'll go to the areas of need," Spencer says. "I will serve outside the orbit of Crieff for people who cannot go there or who might never consider attending programs there." He calls his new Guelph-based venture *Laos Ministries*. It is a specialized ministry for Presbyterians which grows from his more than 30 years of experience at Crieff and in pastoral charges. His particular interest in developing lay leadership also formed the basis for his doctor of ministry degree from McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario.

The future needs and focus of the Crieff project have been closely examined over the past two or three years. With a restructuring of the administration approved and well under way, it is vital Crieff not lose its basic Christian focus while coming to grips with the manner in

to G

which it can best serve the laity, says David Huggins, chair of the Maclean Estate Committee that oversees the day-to-day operations of Crieff Hills. It is anticipated the five- or six-member board will meet monthly in its initial phases.

Spencer was appointed the first director of Crieff while in his eighth year of ministry at the Arthur and Gordonville churches in Ontario. Within months, the first of several congregational retreats took place in a stone farmhouse which soon became the temporary home of the Spencer family. By the summer of that year, the former teacher's house on the Maclean property had been renovated, and furnishings and bunk-beds moved into what became known as the House of the Shepherd.

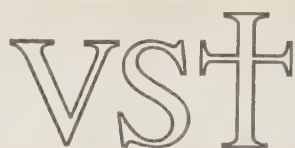
Earlier plans for a major centre on the property had been judged overly ambitious. The new leadership, director and committee, started to develop gradually with "God's leading," recalls Spencer.

After
25 years as
the Crieff Hills
Community
director,
Bob Spencer
goes on the road
with *Laos*
Ministries

by Ivor Williams

The buildings, new and old, as well as grounds and trails began to take shape into what is now known throughout the Presbyterian Church as a world-class retreat and conference centre, "a place apart — to come together."

The late Colonel J. B. Maclean, founder of *Maclean's* magazine, donated the Crieff property to The Presbyterian Church in Canada. Threats against the property by a proposed re-routing of traffic arteries and the development of adjacent property were successfully opposed during Spencer's leadership. The 100-hectare property has remained the idyllic setting for individual renewal that the donor envisioned.



Vancouver School of Theology

Director of Native Ministries Degree Program

Vancouver School of Theology is a multid denominational school serving the Anglican (Episcopalian), Presbyterian and United churches. VST has offered the Master of Divinity degree program by extension for 12 years to people in ministry in First Nations communities by using local tutors who are in touch with VST faculty. The present director is retiring at the end of 1999.

VST seeks a person who has a passionate commitment to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, a vision for providing community-based theological education, the ability to be flexible and travel as needed, and who has links to a home community of First Nations people. Competency in the use of computers for electronic communication and educational technology is essential. The position is defined as 60% time allocation.

In addition, it is hoped that the successful applicant would be a member of VST's teaching faculty and would, therefore, have the credentials to teach in a ministry or theological discipline appropriate to the curriculum at VST. Additional teaching or administrative responsibilities could augment the 60% time allocation to full time, depending on the qualifications of the applications and the needs of the school.

In accordance with Canadian Immigration requirements, priority will be given to Canadian citizens and permanent residents of Canada.

A position description is available from the office of the Principal of VST, Dr. William J. Phillips, 6000 Iona Drive, Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1L4
Telephone: (604) 822-9801
Fax: (604) 822-9212
E-mail: budphil@vst.edu
Web page: www.vst.edu

Closing date for applications is
October 31, 1999.

The staff of the community has grown to about 20, with hundreds of volunteers taking part in the programs, maintenance and development of the property. Members of other denominations have made extensive use of the facilities when not booked in advance by Presbyterians, and several Elderhostel programs have used the site. Elderhostel participants come from far and wide in Canada and beyond, some surprised to learn that grace sung before meals and morning and evening worship are part of the Crieff experience. If they choose, participants are able to bracket their days

And it is seeking a part-time chaplain to help the centre live up to its mandate as a model Christian community in service to laity and to the community in general.

The new management structure is building on an administrative model developed by Professor John Carver particularly for not-for-profit organizations. Its aim is not to administer specific functions but to set policies and monitor performance. Directors and staff have defined limits and responsibilities. Previous boards without such guidelines may have had no clear idea of their responsibilities and could have been considered

“I'll go to the areas of need.
I will serve outside the orbit of Crieff
for people who cannot go there
or who might never consider
attending programs there”

with prayer and worship in a way not a part of such programs elsewhere.

The construction program over the years of Spencer's leadership saw the erection of eight new buildings, five building additions and many major renovations. The centre grew from having no overnight accommodation to providing more than 150 beds in nine residences with home-style food served in the central dining room, the former schoolhouse.

Last year, the committee determined it could no longer afford two directors — one involved in administration (now managing director Greg Sumner), the other (Spencer) in developing programs and growth. Spencer declined an opportunity to apply for the newly created position of managing director and “retired” to his home in nearby Guelph. He continued to add his strong singing voice to several musical groups in the area and to begin to develop a new career.

The board's new advisory committee will look carefully at the precise types of programs offered at Crieff, and whether they should focus on more specific needs.

either too laid-back or as interfering, suggests David Huggins.

Over the past quarter-century, many hundreds of General Assembly or congregational committee members, elders, Christian education teachers, ministers, seniors and teenagers have enriched themselves and their programs through attendance at the many Crieff Hills sessions. Spencer was “a wonderful entrepreneur by nature and almost single-handedly built the Crieff structure,” recalls Huggins. His great contribution was recognized at this year's General Assembly.

The former director is now offering something similar to the Crieff training and its development programs to groups on their own territory. His *Laos Ministries* aims to help “prepare God's people for works of service.” That's what he and the Crieff Hills Community have done for almost 25 years. Both plan to continue into the next century. **R**

Ivor Williams is a writer, a member of Westmount Church, London, Ont., and a contributing editor of this magazine.

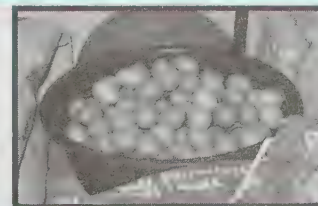
PWS DEVELOPMENTS

a newsletter of Presbyterian World Service & Development

Fall 1999



Central America A Year after Mitch



Clockwise: 1) Mayan women in Guatemala improve their poultry project with business training from PWS&D's partner CEIDEC.

2) A small shop, begun with a loan from PWS&D's partner CIVEMN — provides a source of income for the entrepreneur, and a much needed supply of goods for a community displaced by Hurricane Mitch

3) New homes being built for people uprooted by Hurricane Mitch

"Imagine you are 18 years old. You live in a one-room house with plastic sheets for walls. You have no clean water. Your diet consists of corn and milk, and you cook on a wood stove that fills your home with smoke. You cannot read or write. You have no medicine or access to health care, and you are pregnant with your second child. Worst of all, you have no hope that your situation will change for the better."

This was the reality that confronted PWS&D's committee member Alison Coke when she visited Central America for the first time in August 1999. Attending a conference in Nicaragua with PWS&D's Central American partners, Coke learned that many in Central America do not know where the next meal will come from, or how they will provide for their children—a situation made worse when Hurricane Mitch devastated many already impoverished communities.

But at the conference, and through

visits to project sites in Nicaragua, Guatemala and El Salvador, Coke also heard many stories of hope.

"The situation changed radically for a group of young women in rural El Salvador, when the Institute for Women (IMU)—one of PWS&D's partners—began to help" Coke noted. Since 1995, with resources provided by PWS&D, IMU has helped these women build new houses equipped with vegetable gardens, eco-friendly latrines and smokeless, fuel-efficient stoves. Then IMU helped them build their own meeting center with a kindergarten and primary school, and helped arrange for a doctor to visit the community. The children now have a school to attend and, twice a week, the women can go to the center for their health care and education needs.

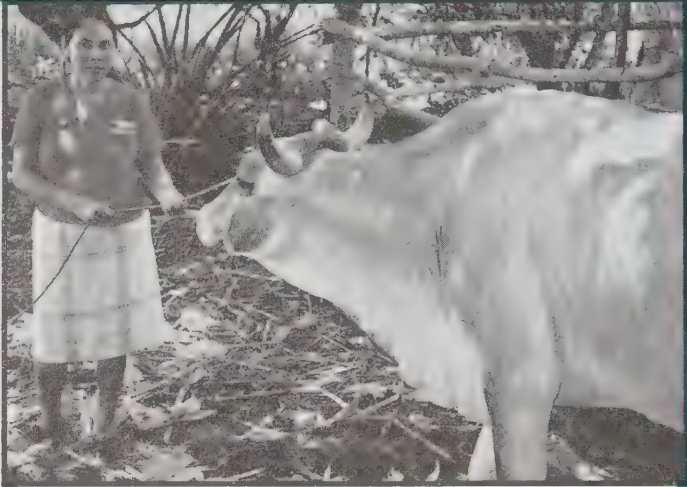
"More than the buildings, the medical clinic, the basic schooling and the "one-square" meal a day, IMU has helped these people see a

(Continued on page 2)





Above: A year after Mitch, PWS&D partners in Nicaragua continue innovative education programs which help vulnerable youth stay in school.



Left: PWS&D's partner, the Nicaraguan YMCA, helps families replenish livestock lost in Hurricane Mitch. The woman pictured received this cow on the condition that it's first female calf is passed on to another family in the community.



Left: Farmers are almost ready to harvest this corn planted from seed shipped to farmers in Livingston by PWS&D partner CEIDEC after they lost all they had in Hurricane Mitch

(Continued from page 1)

better future for themselves and given them the organizational skills and confidence in their capacity to improve their situation." Coke recounts.

This was just one of the stories of hope shared during the conference which brought together PWS&D's Central American partners, PWS&D's Program Co-ordinator, two PWS&D committee members, six International Ministries staff and a representative from the Canadian International Development Agency. From Guatemala, El Salvador, the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Nicaragua and Canada, this diverse group of people gathered to discuss strategies and challenges for relief and development in Central America.

Held in Managua, Nicaragua this was the first time that these people, all dedicated to alleviating poverty in Central America, had met together. Originally scheduled for November 1998, the conference was postponed when Hurricane Mitch devastated

Central America. Holding the conference ten months after Hurricane Mitch allowed the partners to share their experiences and reflect on the future of a region that has been stricken by poverty for too long.

The partners shared their strategies for mobilizing resources to feed and house the victims of Hurricane Mitch. With PWS&D's help, and their experience in community development, they were able to distribute food to the hungry, build homes and latrines for the uprooted, distribute seeds to farmers for replanting, and provide loans to help people restart small businesses.

Guy Smagghe, PWS&D Program Co-ordinator notes that "PWS&D's partners are also committed to rebuilding a Central America that was different." The partners shared the stories of how they continued the long term development projects begun before the hurricane. Through education, health agriculture, income

generating projects, they continue to strive to change the structures that keep people in poverty. Mayan women are now

supporting their families with poultry businesses after receiving training to increase the efficiency of their businesses. Salvadoran communities are growing vegetables to feed their children and earn an income. Street children in Nicaragua are making it through school successfully.

The conference ended with the partners having a greater understanding of PWS&D and each other. The experience strengthened our commitment to share information and expertise, and collaborate more closely in the coming years.

Note: All PWS&D funds designated for Hurricane Mitch relief have been spent. Many people still need housing and sanitation facilities. Your donation to PWS&D can still make a difference.

MITCH VIDEO

Order this 15 minute video outlining Canadian Presbyterians' response to Hurricane Mitch from PWS&D.

A Tale of Two Communities

Chennai, India—Jaya Lakshmi is proud of the the women's association in Natham Village. They have done so much, in such a short time.

Five years ago work was getting so hard to find that many were having difficulty providing even one meal a day for their families. Despite years of promises from the government, the village still did not have water, electricity, or sewage. Most of their children were not in school. Today, the village is so different.

It began with the help of a social worker from PWS&D's partner, the *Institute for Development Education (IFDE)*. He suggested that the women of the community tackle some community problems by working together in a women's association. Jaya was elected President.

The women's association decided their priorities would be health, education, and jobs. They began by showing parents the benefits of education and encouraging families

to send their children to school. Today most of the children not only go to school, they also get tutoring help after classes, to make sure they will succeed.

The women's association then petitioned the Government for electricity, sewage and water. After five years, taps were installed in the community and electrical wires were connected. They must still work to get proper sewage facilities.

IFDE also helped the women learn about microcredit programs and provided them with seed money to begin a revolving-loan program. Entrepreneurs received loans by demonstrating that they had plans for repayment, and that the business would benefit the community. So far the micro-credit program has helped people open small shops and start bicycle repair, tailoring and pottery businesses. Many loans have already been paid back. More are being given out.

A few years ago, IFDE helped the association arrange for a doctor to visit the community twice a week. It was then that the social worker suggested that the doctor could visit the tribal community two kilometers away. But that was not acceptable either to Natham village, nor to the tribal community.

The tribal communities' small dark huts, and their practice of going into the thick dark woods to cut bush and tree roots, had earned them the name of *irular*—"the people of darkness". The people in the village believed that the



Members of Natham Village and the tribal community proudly show the new well that has been built in the tribal community.

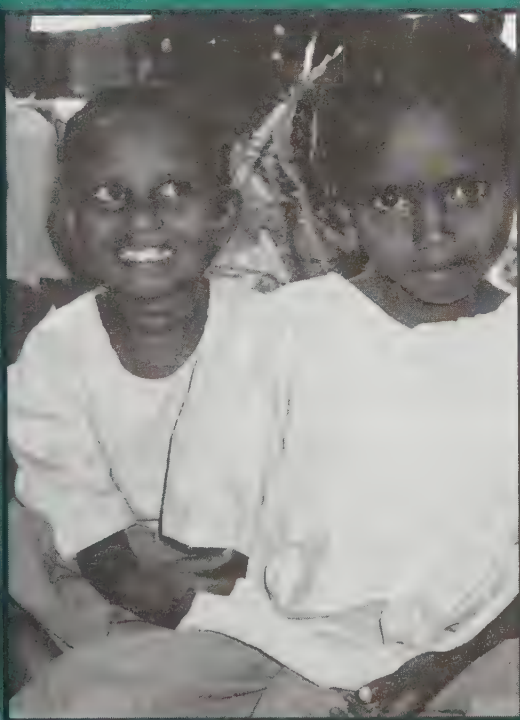
irulars, would bring in "darkness"—ill-omen and diseases. Furthermore, the *irulars* believed that they—being among the ancient people of India—were socially superior to the *dalits*—"the untouchables"—of Natham village.

In this complex situation, IFDE held workshops in each community covering the history of India, and the need for the people at the grass roots to work together to overcome common problems of poverty. The two communities met together with IFDE leaders, but they seemed to be making no progress.

Now Jaya felt it was time to do something more radical. With women from Natham village, she visited the women from the tribal community. They spent time talking about their difficulties and sharing the experiences of their women's association. The tribal people decided that they would form an association. With the encouragement and support of the women from Natham Village, the

Two communities divided by fear, prejudice, and superstition, work together to overcome common problems of poverty.

Students in their new school uniforms.



(Continued on page 4)

UNTIL THE NEXT HARVEST

In April 1999 PWS&D's equity in the Canadian Foodgrains Bank allowed the Presbyterian Church of Mozambique to respond to drought in South and Central Mozambique. They purchased 33.5 tons of grains and cereals locally to help 2200 families survive the two months until the next harvest. International Ministries staff Mark Gordon helped coordinate the food purchase while he was in Canada recovering from a motorcycle accident. He continued the work when he returned to Mozambique in February. Here is his account of one day of food distribution.



April 28, 1999. 7:30 am. Five months of planning. Over the next few days food will be distributed to 2200 families. Here, a sea of people stand huddled in groups talking quietly as the trucks full of food pull up. The group is mostly women— young and old—eagerly awaiting the food.

Each recipient, usually a woman with a young child strapped to her back, approaches the table. She states her name and then signs the recipient list. Next, she passes by the flour, rice, bean, and groundnut stations. At the end of the line she collects her oil and the woman, with a smile on her face and the food loaded on top of her head, begins the journey home.

One old woman, unable to walk, sat on the ground. When her name was called a young girl stepped forward and collected the products for her. Another woman, unable to see due to cataracts, was given a hand to guide her through

the distribution line. Then, with her food on top of her head, she turns to her right and heads for home by herself.

Throughout the day the curious, and the greedy, gather to watch. Some try to sneak into the line but the community leaders, acting as guards, chase them away. Time and again a man or woman approaches the pastor who is calling out the names. "Pastor, why is my name not on the list?" complains one person. "Don't you know, I am hungry?" The pastor takes the person aside and asks them their name and community.

"Fatima...from Macaucau", one woman replies hesitantly. The pastor speaks to one of the community leaders from Macaucau and asks them about her claim. The elder then heads to the table to consult the Macaucau list. Within minutes the leader returns and usually replies, "Fatima, your daughter collected the food for you. I remember talking to her this morning. She said that you were busy and asked her to go in your place". An excuse is usually offered and the plaintiff usually heads off. Occasionally, when the community leaders, who prepared the recipients lists, forgot to include the person's name, the name is quickly added and they are given their prescribed allotment, with apologies.

Finally the day is done. As the trucks pull away, thirty remaining women sing and dance together as one. *Kanimabo, kanimabo* they sing, *thank you, thank you*

Mark Gordon continues to help the Presbyterian Church of Mozambique develop its capacity for relief and development

(Continued from page 3)
new association grew.

One of the first things the tribal community tackled was their water supply. The people were constantly suffering from water borne diseases. The well, where they drew their water, was well below ground level. During the rainy season, polluted water from the street would fill the well. So the community worked together to repair the well.

Then they decided to send their children to school. At first the school authorities denied admission, claiming that the children were too sick and dirty for school. With help the Natham village women's association, the tribal women held classes on hygiene and health to prepare the children for school. When they were finally admitted, the children were asked to sit in the corner of the classroom because of the teachers' prejudices. IFDE worked with the teachers and helped the community purchase uniforms for the children. When the children went in school uniforms, they were accepted.

Another major concern was deforestation, with its devastating effect on the environment. The tribal women's association discouraged community members from cutting the trees, especially the tree roots.

With a revolving loan fund they helped community members find alternative sources of income by beginning their own businesses. One has purchased nets for fishing in a nearby fresh water lake. Another purchases fresh vegetables to sell in the community. Another still is selling kerosene oil for hurricane lamps (until electricity is installed in the village).

With these changes the two communities are now functioning as one. They have overcome their fear, prejudice and superstition to work together to overcome common problems of poverty.

Note: PWS&D and IFDE continue to support these communities with encouragement and financial assistance. The two women's associations currently have plans for housing, agriculture, and goat projects.

- P. Robert Guruswamy
Director, IFDE

PWSDevelopments

is an educational resource produced twice a year by Presbyterian World Service & Development with financial support from the Canadian International Development Agency. For more information, to order more copies, or be placed on a standing order, contact PWS&D at:

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1-800-619-7301
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e-mail: pwsd@presbyterian.ca
web site: www.presbyterian.ca/pwsd

Celebrate.



Andrew Kerr Resigns

On July 13, Andrew Kerr, program assistant to the *Celebrate!* Committee, resigned to be business assistant to the city clerk in Toronto. Andrew describes his decision as "bitter-sweet." He says he enjoyed working "for such a dynamic committee" and hopes to continue to help as a volunteer. Those who have worked with Andrew appreciate his efforts helping church courts and congregations organize their celebrations.

Heritage Resources

In 1982, the Board of Congregational Life published *Heritage Resources* under four titles: *The Church Confesses Its Faith*, *The Church Grows*, *The Church Decides* and *The Church Celebrates Its Faith*. Material for each theme came in colourful eight- by 11-inch boxes. These resources for all ages provide a gold mine of material for making banners, writing plays or producing programs to celebrate our church's 125th anniversary. Unfortunately, they are no longer available. Look for copies in your church library, from your minister or in a dusty corner where your congregation stores unused Christian education materials.

Roots and Wings

The E. H. Johnson Memorial Trust Fund is supporting the Millennium/125th/Jubilee *Celebrate!* initiative by adopting the theme "Roots and Wings." In 1999-2000, the theme of "Roots" will form the basis of the annual award and the exchange. In 2000-2001, "Wings" will focus on denominations in the developing world.

Roots 1999-2000

The recipient of the 1999 E. H. Johnson Award was John L. Bell, a minister of the Church of Scotland, a member of the Wild Goose Resource Group of hymn-writers and a worker in the Iona Community in Glasgow.

In November, Bell will conduct workshops on congregational song and participative liturgy in Calgary and Vancouver. Writer of 10 hymns in our new *Book of Praise*, Bell is able to work with material familiar to the audience. His specialty is working with people without musical backgrounds.

Bell will spend a day leading events in Kitchener-Waterloo and another day in Toronto. The E. H. Johnson Committee hopes he will be able to visit Atlantic Canada and Quebec in the year 2000. The committee also hopes to arrange workshops for students at Knox College and St. Andrew's Hall. Bell offers a framework for why some people resist change and the means by which they can accept what is strange to them.

The 1999-2000 E. H. Johnson Exchange With the Church of Scotland

In late October, Rev. Andrew and Fiona Campbell of Oban, Scotland, will spend three weeks in Canada as guests of the trust fund. In Calgary, they will pursue their interests in theology and art. They will spend time in Ontario and visit Atlantic Canada where the first Scottish settlers built churches and educational institutions.

Fiona Campbell, an elder, has been a national leader in the Women's Guild and is now the convener of a multid denominational design group for Scottish churches. This group produced resources to help churches lead a Christian celebration of the millennium.

Andrew Campbell has been parish minister in the Highland west-coast town of Oban (population 10,000) for 20 years. He has served the national church as a member of the Board of Communication. The Campbells led a team to set up a community radio station in Oban.

A process is under way to select two Canadian Presbyterians to visit Scotland in the spring of 2000. **R**

From Our Congregations



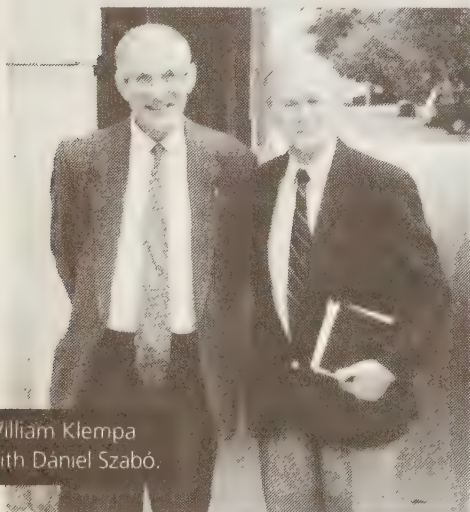
Knox Presbyterian Church, Goderich, Ontario, recently introduced a new millennium publication. This tour guide and historical reference booklet is designed for both visitors and members who wish to learn more about the buildings and the rich heritage of the congregation. Pictured are four executive members of the congregational life committee who wrote the booklet: back (L to R), Diane McIntosh and Richard Madge; front (L to R), John Stringer and Fran McLean.

"God Moves in a Mysterious Way"

1956 Hungarian Uprising

As a result of the Hungarian uprising, some 27,000 refugees came to Canada, about one-third of them Presbyterians who were welcomed by the immigration department of the Canadian church. Congregations in Montreal supplied bales of clothing for the newcomers and a service of welcome was held in Toronto at which Hungarian Bibles were presented to them. To aid the escapees, the immigration department staff in Britain had been increased, and Magyar-speaking ministers, translators, counsellors and others were organized in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver. Rev. Fred Metzger of Vancouver was posted to Austria to meet the refugees, and copies of *New Life* were printed and distributed there.

— *Enduring Witness*



William Klempa
with Daniel Szabó.

Double Responsibilities

Many Presbyterians and even some presbyteries do not understand the special situation of ethnic Hungarian churches. These congregations have double roots. Living in Canada, where they are better off financially than people in past- and present-day Hungary (not to mention Slovakia, the sub-Carpathian region in Ukraine and Transylvania inside Romania, where sizable Hungarian Reformed [Presbyterian] communities exist), they receive petitions for financial help that are justifiable and urgent. Therefore, the limited resources of ethnic Canadian congregations have to be divided between present denominational responsibilities and the needs of the parent church in the old homeland. Unfortunately, this legitimate aid effort is sometimes seen as partisan action.

— *Peter Szabó, Montreal*

by William Klempa

The opening line of William Cowper's well-known hymn is how Dr. Anne-Marie Kool, a Dutch professor at the Hungarian Sarospatak Seminary, speaks of the Hungarian Reformed Church in her book *God Moves in a Mysterious Way*. Through this church, God has been pleased to "treasure up his bright designs, and work his sovereign will."

The Magyar Reformed is a remarkable church with an impressive history of work and witness in Hungary, Ukraine, Transylvania and Slovakia. Our Canadian Presbyterian Church has been greatly enriched by Hungarian Reformed Christians; yet, we do not know as much about the parent church as we should. My moderatorial visit to Hungary with my wife, Lois, enabled us to make the acquaintance of some of its bishops, ministers, elders and laypeople and to become familiar with the splendid work it is doing.

A Brief History

Although Christianity was preached in what is now known as Hungary as early as the fourth century, it was not until King (St.) Stephen's reign (1001-1038) that the nomadic Magyars settled permanently in the land and became Christian. King Stephen decreed that every 10 villages had to build a church and all Hungarians — fire-minders excepted — had to attend church every Sunday.

The Reformation

In 1526, the Muslim Turks defeated the Hungarians at Mohács. In God's

One of the oldest Reformed churches displays new vigour in Eastern Europe while many of its members continue a vital presence within The Presbyterian Church in Canada

mysterious providence, this event, that weakened the country and created political discord, worked to win most of Hungary over to the Protestant reform movement. The Reformed seminary in Sarospatak in northeastern Hungary was founded as early as 1531 and the Debrecen seminary six years later. The Bible was translated into the Hungarian language in 1590. During

the Counter-Reformation, the Roman Catholic Church reasserted itself, especially in the western part of the country. In the east and in what is now Transylvania, Protestantism remained strong despite persecution. Calvinism was the dominant theological and ecclesiastical form it took. Why it endured in Hungary and not in Poland, for example, has puzzled historians. Debrecen, the ecclesiastical and cultural centre, became known as Calvinist Rome. It is estimated there are now about three million Calvinist Magyars living in Hungary, Transylvania, Croatia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine.

Persecution

The 17th and 18th centuries were the heroic centuries in the history of the Hungarian Reformed Church. In the face of persecution by Roman Catholics, Hungarian Calvinists resisted not with the sword but, as Dr. Imre Revesz has written, "by suffering grimly and in silence, and living in entire dependence ... on the grace and power of God." Ministers were brought before the authorities on trumped-up charges and exiled, put to the rack, imprisoned or sold as galley

The Hungarian Reformed Church

slaves. All this in a country where the Transylvanian Constitution provided religious freedom as early as 1568.

With Joseph II's Edict of Toleration in 1781, the Hungarian Reformed Church was permitted to build churches and schools. The office of lay-chairperson or curator duplicated the office of ministerial moderator at session, presbytery and synod levels. Later, the office of bishop was established to give the Reformed Church, along with the Roman Catholic Church, a voice in the affairs of the state because bishops were automatically members of the upper house of Parliament.

After the failed revolution of 1848 led by Lajos Kossuth, a graduate of the Reformed school at Sarospatak, the Austrian government took away many of the rights the Reformed Church had gained. Church courts needed permission to meet. The right of the church to appoint teachers was denied. Ministers and teachers who had sided with the revolution were charged with sedition and shot or imprisoned. Over the next few decades, the Reformed Church regained its freedom and legislation passed after the Austro-Hungarian Compromise of 1867 brought about equality of Roman Catholic, Reformed, Lutheran, Unitarian and Orthodox churches.

The Second World War

In 1944, Hitler occupied Hungary and ordered the arrest of priests and ministers who opposed the persecution of the Jews. More than half a million Jews were deported to the German death-camps. The pastor father and mother of Dr. Dániel Szabó, recipient of the 1996 E. H. Johnson Award, and of the Rev. Peter Szabó, minister of the Hungarian congregation in Montreal (there is also a



Sarospatak Seminary
in Hungary.

sister in the Netherlands and two other sisters in Hungary who are ordained ministers — a truly remarkable family) endangered their own lives, as did others (far too few, to be sure), to save many Jews from the Holocaust.

When the Communists came to power in 1947-48, the Reformed and Roman Catholic churches were subjected to intense persecution. Seminaries and church high schools were closed. Cardinal Mindszenty, Lutheran bishop Lajos Ordass and many Reformed pastors were imprisoned. During the 1956 Hungarian Revolution, about 100,000 Hungarians were killed and more than 200,000 fled to western countries including Canada. Some Reformed bishops, ministers and elders collaborated with the Communists but most did not.

The present Reformed bishop of Budapest, Rev. Dr. Lorant Hegedus, related to me how he preached a sermon in Calvin Church in Budapest contrasting the Red Star and the Bethlehem Star. The former, he said, symbolized human self-deification while the latter represented God's self-humiliation in Jesus Christ. One day, the Red Star would fall, he prophesied, but the Bethlehem Star would keep on shining. He was forcibly removed from this high-profile pulpit in Hungary's capital and "exiled" to a small rural congregation. He could not return

Today, in Canada

Today, Hungarian congregations do not enjoy the high esteem they originally had. There is a feeling Hungarians are not easy people to deal with. They came from the nebulous Orient, from a different culture, speak a strange language, lived under various dictatorships, were on the opposite side in the wars and cause problems all the time. The generation of the valiant freedom fighters of 1956 is passing away. Their time is up; they will disappear. The second and the third generations can barely speak their mother tongue. This is one side of the coin.

On the other side, unnoticeable to many, there is a steady influx of Hungarian landed immigrants, triggered by the collapse of communism in East-Central Europe and by the renewed persecution of ethnic Hungarians in the neighbouring countries. At the beginning of this decade, the Edmonton congregation sponsored 150 Hungarian immigrants. Recently, a new development is taking place: the new democratic Hungary is about to join the European community. This opens the way for qualified Hungarians to immigrate to Canada.

In Calgary, 21 people joined the church in 1998 by profession of faith. We are strengthening the links with the parent churches. There are ongoing visits, and we try to help them in their struggle to establish themselves in the new societies after the half-century devastation of communism. It is premature to write off the Hungarian congregations. They still deserve the full support of The Presbyterian Church in Canada to fulfil their mission among newly arriving Hungarian immigrants.

— Joseph Pungur, Calgary

Hungarian Churches Affiliated With The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Calvin, Vancouver
Calvin, Calgary
Calvin, Edmonton,
Hungarian, Lethbridge, Alberta
First Hungarian, Windsor, Ontario
Calvin, Delhi, Ontario
Pleasant Ridge, Brantford, Ontario
John Calvin, Hamilton, Ontario
First Hungarian, Toronto
Hungarian, Montreal
Hungarian, Welland, Ontario
Calvin, Ottawa

Note: The first Hungarian-speaking
Presbyterian congregation was formed in
Bekevar, Saskatchewan, in 1907.



Lois Klempa with
Gypsy young people
at the opening of
their new church
in Ukraine.

The Montreal Situation

Our situation is unique. The membership of the original Livingstone Church slowly drifted away by death or due to the Quebec political circumstances. This, too, affected the Hungarian community in Montreal. The once respected district of Park Extension became one of the poorest parts of our city. Immigrants are coming and going. In a joint effort, Livingstone and the Hungarian congregations provide a "railway station mission ministry." We are located among 100 different ethnic peoples and 66 different religions. Overseas mission has come to our doorstep. In these conditions, the two congregations take care of Tamils from Sri Lanka, Ghanaians from Africa, many from Bangladesh as well as people from European countries. The monthly mission outreach dinner (which has operated for more than 3 1/2 years) is also a joint endeavour of the two congregations. We invite people in, right from the street, and feed them and share the gospel with them.

— Peter Szabó

to Budapest until the late 1980s when the historic changes in Eastern Europe, which brought the fall of the Red Star, resulted in new freedom and opportunity for the Hungarian Reformed as well as for other Christian churches.

The Hungarian Reformed Church has experienced the fire of persecution again and again. Yet, by God's grace, though burning, it has remained faithful and has not been consumed (*nec tamen consumebatur*). True to its Calvinist heritage, the church has played a crucial role in the social, political and cultural life of the Hungarian nation.

The Hungarian Church Today

Ten years after being under the thumb of communism for four decades, Hungary is beginning to share in the prosperity of Western Europe. Budapest enjoys economic growth; but, other parts of the country, particularly in the northeast around the city of Miskolc where Bishop Dr. István Mészáros and Dániel Szabó have their offices, have 30 per cent unemployment.

Prosperity in the West has produced indifference and, even, apathy to the gospel; one hopes this will not happen in Hungary. With finan-

cial assistance and personnel, from Dutch, Swiss and German Reformed churches and from Presbyterians in Scotland and the United States, the Hungarian Reformed Church is doing superb work. It would be wonderful if Canadian Presbyterians offered their help.

Transylvania and Ukraine

The Reformed Church also ministers to Hungarians in Transylvania. The Romanian government and the Orthodox Church make life difficult for Reformed and Roman Catholic Christians. Another large enclave of Hungarians outside the country is in Ukraine, west of the Carpathian mountains. Economic conditions there are particularly grim. Unemployment is high and food is scarce. Here, the Reformed Church, under the leadership of Bishop László Horkay, is reaching out in a program of evangelization.

I preached in Bishop Horkay's church to a congregation of about 600 and was privileged to be a guest at the wedding of his daughter Ibolya to Martin Robb, a Scot from Glasgow and Dániel Szabó's assistant. The wedding blended Scottish (kilts *et al.*) and Hungarian customs in a memorable and enjoyable marriage service and reception.

The Faith of the Church

I was deeply impressed with the profound faith, commitment and energy of the bishops, ministers, elders and lay-people we met, as well as their friendliness, kindness and hospitality. The opposition and persecution that the Hungarian Reformed Christians have suffered, particularly under the Communist regime, have produced a living faith that has been "refined as in a furnace" (Revelation 1:15). Reformed confessions such as Heinrich Bullinger's Second Helvetic Confession, promulgated in Debrecen in 1567, and the Heidelberg Catechism (1563) have had considerable impact on the church. Karl Barth's neo-Reformation theology has also strengthened the church and put iron in the blood of Hungarian Reformed Christians during difficult times. I sensed a considerable affinity between their church and ours, particularly in the strong emphasis on biblical preaching.

Commitment to Education

The Hungarian Reformed Church is deeply dedicated to educating its people in the Bible and in the basics of the Christian faith. It maintains an extensive educational system, partly supported by the state but requiring assistance from within the church and from abroad. In less than a decade, more than 80 Reformed high schools have been reopened or new ones built in Hungary, Transylvania and the sub-Carpathian Ukraine.

A new dormitory for female high school students has been built recently in Sarospatak. Dániel Szabó has been largely responsible for raising funds for its construction. I was pleased to visit it and also the high school in Nagydobrony in Ukraine, where funds are needed to refurbish the old buildings neglected during the Communist regime. I also visited the high school and seminary in Debre-

cen, and stayed in the high school dormitory in Budapest.

In Sarospatak, with which I am most familiar, the Reformed high school has about 600 students and 70 teachers. This school (I attended its 1998 fall term opening) has a fine reputation and a waiting list. A number of the students go on each year to study theology at the seminary. It has 125 students and a first-rate faculty of 10 professors, including one who teaches in English.

I was accorded the rare privilege of lecturing to the College of Doctors which met there. I also sat with the professors and Dániel Szabó, the lay president, while the seminary graduates underwent their final oral examinations in the Hebrew and Greek languages, exegesis, systematic theology, church history and pastoral theology. The students acquitted themselves well. Tell it not in Gath (for the remark is aimed at myself as a theological educator), but they are indeed better prepared than our Canadian ministerial graduates.

Do we Canadian Presbyterians not need to reassess the question of Christian high schools since we are losing so many young people through our secular educational system? Would we not benefit by learning from the Hungarian Church about high school and theological education?

Work Among Those in Need

The Hungarian Reformed Church has an enviable record of ministering to those who are poor and in need. A home for handicapped adults has been established. There is a ministry to Gypsies. Lois and I were privileged to be visiting Ukraine when a new Gypsy church was opened. In the evening, I led the service and preached in another Gypsy congregation founded by a Hungarian laywoman. What a delight to see the happy faces of so many children and adults who were present at both services, eager to sing, to pray and to hear the gospel. While in Ukraine, we stayed in an orphanage whose work is renowned throughout Ukraine. It houses 53 well-fed and well-clothed, happy children. The orphanage kitchen also prepares meals that are delivered to hospitals in the area as hospital meals are not provided for patients.

In a recent article in *The Presbyterian Outlook*, an American weekly journal, Cecil Culverhouse, a retired minister, writes that aid is needed from outside Eastern Europe for the work of the Reformed Church in Hungary, Ukraine and Transylvania. He comments: "If that commitment wanes in the next decade or two, the opportunity in Eastern Europe may be lost." I believe he is right. *Carpe diem!* We must seize the opportunity.

What can we do? First, we can cooperate with our Canadian Hungarian Presbyterian congregations to find creative ways of helping the Hungarian Church and its schools and, through Presbyterian World Service and Development, to aid the orphanage in Ukraine. Secondly, we can have youth, theological student and professor exchanges. Thirdly, we might think of beginning mission work in Eastern Europe. The Christian Reformed Church has recently appointed a full-time



worker in Ukraine. Above all, we need to pray for the work of the Church in Eastern Europe. The Hungarian Reformed Church, through which God has moved in a mysterious way, needs our prayers, our support and our gifts.

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea
And rides upon the storm. **R**

William Klempa was Moderator of the 124th General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Just Headaches

A willingness to listen to the special needs and problems of ethnic people is required. Trust me, to be an ethnic is uncomfortable, and churches often do not make it easy. In the two presbyteries with which I have been involved, I have heard people say that ethnic churches are "just headaches." Would it be possible to minister better by knowing that the primary fear ethnic people have is a sense of being lost in a new country and in a new culture? To grow new roots in strange soil where everything is new and different is not easy. It requires a special ministry, particular attention and special love for those who come into our sanctuaries from other countries. The variety of ethnic people within our church, with their religious and cultural customs, should provide a joyful experience for all!

The ethnic church provides a challenge to join together and rejoice in a higher purpose for God has called us to work together. More attention and knowledge of ethnic issues will make the work in the kingdom of God more fulfilling and enjoyable.

— Maria Papp, Welland, Ontario

Aging Congregations

Some Hungarian congregations that did not or could not start English work under the same roof are facing serious difficulties. Theirs is the painful process of death. It seems to me that this is a complex question that should be examined seriously as soon as possible. The Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCC) should consider it a mission to support, even subsidize if necessary, these shrinking and aging ethnic congregations in their final hours. According to the present law and practice, PCC will inherit their properties when they close entirely. Therefore, let them die in dignity, surrounded by tender loving care.

— Peter Szabó

PCC News

Memorial honours early Presbyterian settlers in Quebec

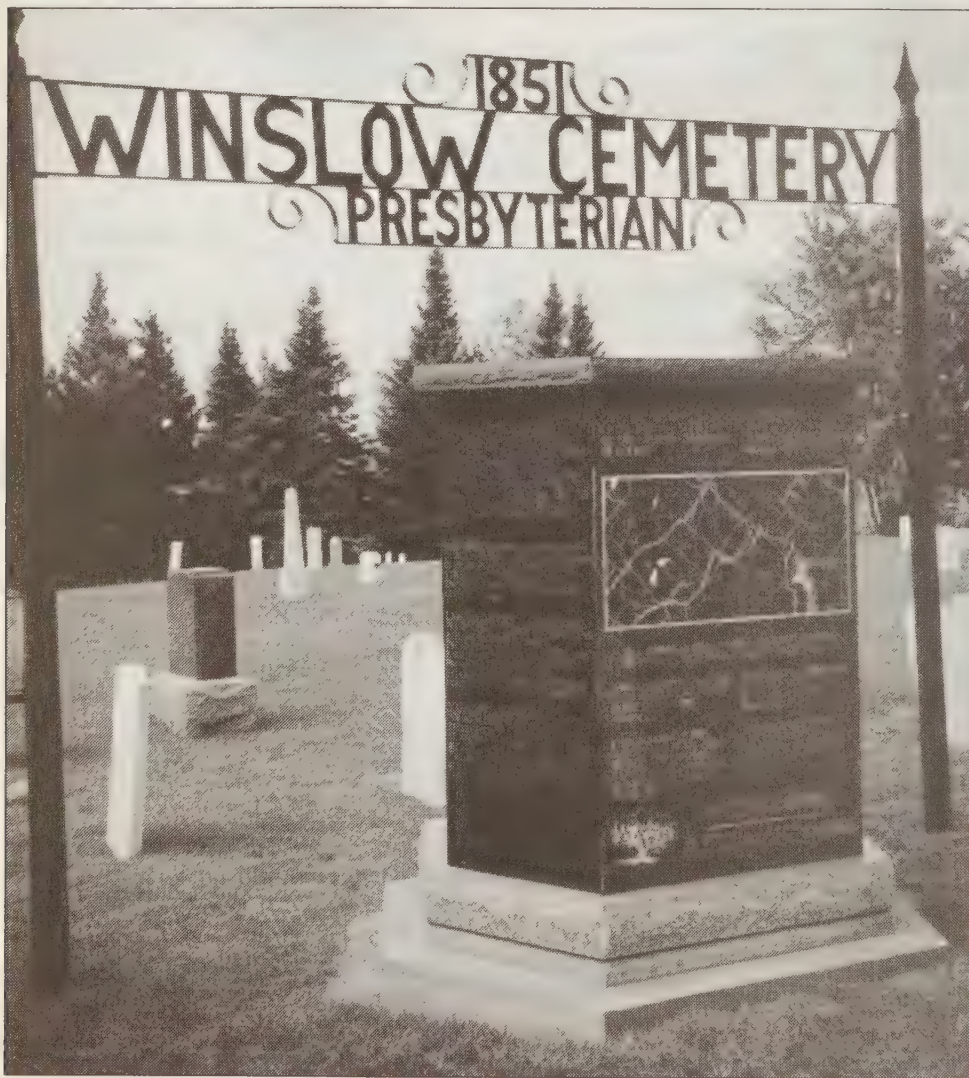
In 1838, men and women from the Isle of Lewis in the Outer Hebrides, who had been dispossessed of their property during the Highland Clearances, were offered virgin forest acreage by The British American Land Company. Waves of Gaelic-speaking immigrants settled in the Lingwick/Megantic/Scotstown districts in the Eastern Townships of Quebec. In each

of their settlements, Presbyterian congregations were established and church buildings gradually erected. Today, only a handful of the descendants of these Scottish homesteaders still resides in the area.

On August 15, a memorial in honour of these pioneers was dedicated in the village of Stornoway, a site selected as the geographical centre of the early set-

tlements. Approximately 150 people gathered for the dedication, including members of the Presbytery of Quebec and special guests. Rev. Scott Emory, moderator of presbytery, conducted the service. Music was provided by members of The Daughters of Glengarry Gaelic Choir and piper Marc LeBel.

The memorial, first proposed by the presbytery and seen to completion by the hard work of Isabell MacArthur Beattie of Sherbrooke and historian Muriel Mayhew, is an impressive tribute. An iron arch over the monument bears the words "1851 Winslow Cemetery, Presbyterian." The six-sided monument is made of marble and measures 2.1 metres high. The histories of the Lewis settlements and the congregations established by the Canada Presbyterian Church (Free) and The Presbyterian Church in Canada are engraved on each of the large panels. Various landmarks can be seen on a map on the front panel. The pioneers' stories are told in English, French and Gaelic. (From a report by John A. Johnston)



PWS&D appointment

Presbyterian World Service and Development has announced the appointment of a new staff member. Beginning September 1, Jean-Frederic Beauchasne will serve as program co-ordinator with responsibilities specifically for Africa (development and relief) and refugee matters. Current staff member Guy Smagghe will serve as program co-ordinator for Asia and Latin America (relief and development) and for overall co-ordination and administration with the Canadian International Development Agency. Beauchasne is originally from Quebec and is a graduate of St. Mary's University in Halifax.

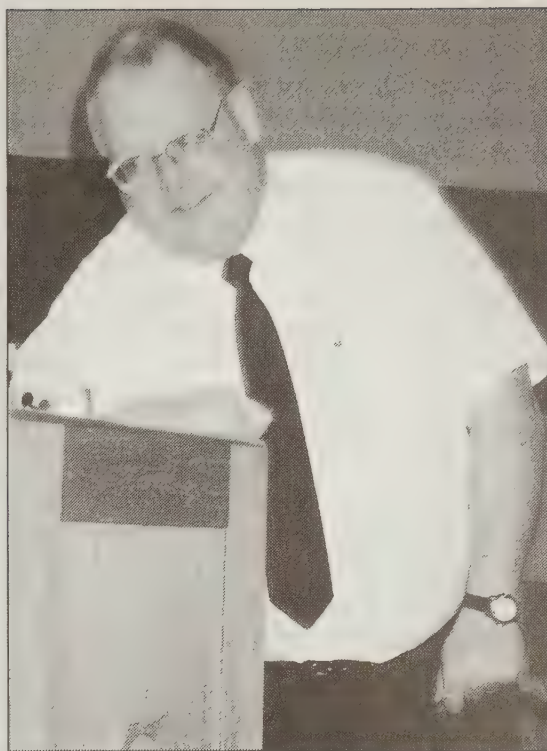
Stewart Gillan appointed CCTE director

Rev. Stewart Gillan has been named executive director of the Churches' Council on Theological Education (CCTE). CCTE is an ecumenical coalition of the Anglican Church in Canada, Canadian Baptist Ministries, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Canada, The Presbyterian Church in Canada, the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops and The United Church of Canada.

Gillan returned to Canada last year after serving for 12 years in South Africa as parish minister in Alexandra, Soweto and Tembisa. Most recently, he was serving as part-time minister at Gateway Church, Toronto, and was engaged in research for International Ministries. He began his new duties on July 1.

Sermons on the mount

An unusual fund-raiser, dubbed "Festival of the Word" (a.k.a. "Top 20 with Talk-Back"), was held by the stewardship committee of West Vancouver Church on May 29. Members of the congregation were invited to select their favourite sermons for Rev. Ian Victor to preach. Beginning at 8 a.m. and ending at 6 p.m., he preached 20 sermons in half-hour segments. Each segment included Scripture reading and an opportunity to ask questions about the sermon. The day also provided the congregation with an opportunity to hear Ian preach before he moved to St. Giles Church, Ottawa. The fund-raiser proved to be an excellent example of harnessing the wind, raising over \$2,000.



"Aw, let's just skip to the end of this one." Rev. Ian Victor preached 20 sermons during a fund-raiser at West Vancouver Church.

Truce reached in seven years war

An out-of-court settlement was recently reached between the Presbytery of Kingston and Rev. Malcolm Muth, ending an acrimonious legal battle that began seven years ago. The settlement reportedly awards Muth \$125,000.

In September 1992, following complaints by members of the congregation, the Presbytery of Kingston dissolved the pastoral tie between Malcolm Muth and St. Andrew's Church, Belleville, Ontario. At that time, Muth was given use of the manse for six months and six months salary. Further attempts at a satisfactory agreement failed. In July 1993, Muth filed a Statement of Claim against the Presbytery of Kingston in which he and his wife, Marie, sought \$2 million in damages, as well as his reinstatement as minister of St. Andrew's. The presbytery continued to search for a solution, but matters remained stalemated for years. It was only when both parties were recently preparing to have the case resolved by a civil court in Belleville that an agreement was reached.

Muth claimed the whole process was without authority and contrary to the rules of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and the rules of Natural Justice. According to Gordon Ross, one of his lawyers, the settlement serves to "vindicate Muth and those many individuals who supported him." For his part, Muth said he was glad the process was over. He said that, at his wife's request, he was giving the settlement to her for her birthday.

According to Rev. Barry Van Dusen, convener of the commission appointed by presbytery to deal with the Muths' lawsuit, the matter should have been settled by the courts of the church. "Church discipline, to which we ministers agree to abide at ordination, is very specific in stating that, as ministers, we are under the lawful oversight of our church courts, and that we are to follow no divisive course," he said. "The time and money consumed in dealing with this matter could certainly have been put to better use within God's Kingdom."

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Other News

Learning is truth, truth learning

On August 1 at 5 p.m., the moderator of the North Synod of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan met with the president and officers of Tamsui Oxford University College on the road in front of the college gate. In the presence of a large number of well-wishers, and in the midst of passing pedestrians and cars, a plaque renaming the college Truth University was formally unveiled with prayer, hymns and Scripture.

The university, whose official English name is Aletheia (Greek for "truth") University, continues the long history of a school first begun in 1882 by Canadian Presbyterian Dr. George Leslie Mackay. The school, first named Oxford College after Mackay's home county in Ontario, became the centre of his teaching ministry.

In 1909, the college became the Taipei Theological School; and, in 1914, it served as the first classrooms of the Tamsui Middle School. In 1936, the church

was compelled to sell Oxford College to a Japanese consortium. This sale meant the property was classified as enemy territory when Taiwan was restored to the Chinese government in 1945. It took many years of negotiation, at one time involving a delegation from The Presbyterian Church in Canada, before the college was returned to the church.

After several years as a dormitory and a kindergarten, the old college building became the centrepiece in the new Presbyterian education institution called Tamsui Oxford College in 1965. It was the culmination of a long-held Presbyterian vision to extend church-related education to the university level. In 1994, the Ministry of Education approved the school's elevation to a four-year college (Tamsui Oxford University College) and, in 1999, to a full university.

Dr. Neng-che Yeh, president of the school, has waged a long, patient campaign to establish the Presbyterian uni-

versity. When he realized the Ministry of Education would not approve a "Taiwanese Oxford University" without the consent of Oxford University in England, Yeh chose Truth University as the school's new name. It symbolizes the truth found in the Lord, and also gives a nod to the road that traverses the school — Chen-li Street (Chinese for "truth").

The college's Christian emphasis can clearly be seen in a new Grand Chapel, which has a seating capacity of 1,500. Opened by Taiwan President Lee Teng-hui, the chapel was completed in 1997 and dominates the western skyline of Tamsui. In the centre of the campus stands Mackay's Oxford College, a permanent symbol of Taiwanese-Canadian Presbyterian co-operation. Designated by the Ministry of the Interior as a National Heritage Artifact in 1986, the college now functions as the Mackay Memorial Museum. (*From a report by Betty Geddes, International Ministries staffperson in Taiwan*)



Aletheia (Truth) University, Tamsui, Taiwan.

PC(USA) General Assembly fairly harmonious

As John A. Bolt put it in the denomination's magazine, *The Presbyterian Outlook*, the 211th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Fort Worth, Texas, was a "cheerful gathering" — "a lean to the left, a lean to the right, some standing up and some sitting down but, unlike some years, not much fight, fight, fight."

The most controversial issue the 560 commissioners faced was an overture from Milwaukee Presbytery that sought a vote by presbyteries on whether to remove from the denomination's *Book of Order* a paragraph that requires church officers to "live either in fidelity within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman, or chastity in singleness." In the end, although the Assembly Committee on Church Orders and Ministry recommended the overture be sent out for presbytery vote, the commissioners opted for no votes, instead urging the church at all levels to conduct "Unity"

conferences. They also recommended next year's Assembly not consider the issue, but refer it to the 2001 meeting.

In other sexuality issues, commissioners: voted to edit the church's sexuality curriculum so it stresses abstinence more and contraception less; declined to authorize a study of providing same-sex partners of non-clergy church employees the identical pension and medical benefits married couples receive; rejected overtures both supporting and objecting to so-called "restoration therapy" of homosexuals.

One expected battle never materialized when a pre-Assembly commission voted 41-40 to proceed with the presentation of Women of Faith Awards to Jane Spahr, a lesbian minister, and two others who favour the ordination of homosexuals.

In other business, a recommendation that the denomination's top level be restructured was adopted with little change

from the report of the Special Committee for Review of the General Assembly. If a majority of the 173 presbyteries accepts the necessary changes to the *Book of Order*, the current Committee on the Office of General Assembly will be replaced with a slightly larger Council of the Assembly. The 21-member council would be responsible for seeing that each Assembly's instructions are followed and for resolving disputes between any of the entities. The current council would be renamed the Mission Agency and would be responsible solely for carrying out the mission of the church.

Commissioners also adopted a church-wide strategy "Facing Racism: A Vision of the Beloved Community," calling on Presbyterians to fight racism.

Freda Gardner, a 70-year-old retired professor of Christian education from Princeton, New Jersey, was elected Moderator on the second ballot. (*The Presbyterian Outlook*)



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NEWS

Ecumenical movement out of touch, warns theologian

The president of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC) has declared that the ecumenical movement is out of touch with people in the churches and has "almost ceased ... to be taken seriously as a spiritual force." Professor Choan-Seng Song, a specialist in systematic theology and professor at California's Pacific School of Religion and Graduate Theological Union, made his remarks in his opening address at the annual meeting of the WARC executive in Taipei on July 2. Referring to the financial problems faced by WARC and many other confessional and ecumenical bodies, Professor Song declared that, perhaps, the "financial coffer is empty because the spiritual coffer of our member Christians is empty. Or, perhaps, the alliance's spiritual coffer itself, after more than a century, has become empty." (ENI)

sentiments shows a lack of respect for people because it attacks human dignity," said Victor Hugo Martinez, president of the Guatemalan Bishops' Conference. (ENI)

News Scan

Vernon congregation offers help to Kosovar refugees

Knox Church, Vernon, British Columbia, was one of six local churches that welcomed 33 Kosovar refugees to their town on June 22. The churches are all sponsoring families, helping the newcomers adjust by showing them how to open bank accounts and find grocery stores, and by taking them to see doctors and dentists. They were also able to find accommodation for the families — all in the same apartment building. The federal government furnished the apartments. The churches are continuing to provide support in various facets of the refugees' lives. (BC Christian News)

sentiments shows a lack of respect for people because it attacks human dignity," said Victor Hugo Martinez, president of the Guatemalan Bishops' Conference. (ENI)

Not a guitar in sight

Canada's oldest association of musicians has been celebrating its 90th anniversary in 1999. The Royal Canadian College of Organists was founded in 1909 and, today, is a country-wide, interdenominational community of professional and amateur organists, church musicians, choral conductors and others sharing an interest in the organ and church music. Its membership is open to anyone regardless of skill level or religious affiliation.

As election draws near, Guatemala's politicians discover religion

Guatemalan church leaders have called on their country's politicians not to use religion as a tactic to win votes in upcoming elections in November. "It bothers us that candidates manipulate the faith and goodwill of the faithful for political ends," says Moises Colop, a Presbyterian pastor and spokesperson for the Guatemalan Conference of Evangelical Churches. "These are candidates who mention the name of God all the time so that people will say they are strong believers." The Roman Catholic Church, to which 75 per cent of Guatemala's 11 million people belong, agrees. "Manipulating religious

Learning and sharing

Ministry with Children and Youth reports that last year's Learning/Sharing material was enormously popular with Presbyterian young people and has netted close to \$20,000 in scholarships for school kids living in the Guatemala City dump.

A communal cup

Parishioners at Christ the King Roman Catholic Church in Dallas, Texas, had a chance to see a holy grail of a different kind when Pat Verbeek, a forward with the Stanley Cup champion Dallas Stars who attends Christ the King, brought the cup to church for everyone to see.

Thomas Macpherson: The Vigilant Church-Builder

Tom Dickey

On June 1, 1849, Rev. Thomas Macpherson, his wife, Sarah, and their four children boarded a sailing ship for Canada. In what was to be a turning point in his life, and the life of the Presbyterian Church, Macpherson had been named a "Missionary to North America" by the Colonial Committee of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.

One hundred and fifty years later, on October 17, 1999, the congregation of Knox Church, Stratford, Ontario, will celebrate the anniversary of his arrival with the unveiling of a bronze plaque recognizing his significant contribution to Presbyterianism. That plaque will also stand as a tribute to a hard-working man of strong moral character, someone who saw what had to be done and did it.

Born in County Antrim, Ireland, in 1810, Thomas Macpherson came by a taste for learning and hard work at an early age. At 14, he was given charge of the local school he attended, enabling him to finance his literary and theological studies at The Royal Belfast Institution. He graduated in 1836 and was called to First Bellaghy Church, County Derry. During his 13 years there, he had his first experiences in church construction and financing, gaining knowledge that would serve him well in the colony.

Shortly after the Macpherson family landed in Quebec, Thomas accepted an invitation to be pastor to a few families in Stratford who had left the Auld Kirk and adhered to the principles of the Free Church. It was a Stratford, far from the busy tourist designation it is today, comprised of about 30 houses. The congregation met in a log schoolhouse, but the new minister had a brick church in mind. You can almost picture the good reverend removing his suit coat (but *not* his clerical collar), rolling up his sleeves, rubbing his hands together and settling down to work. He contacted the Canada Company of London, England, a major developer of the Stratford area, and obtained a free building site and a contribution of 100 pounds. He then travelled to Philadelphia where he obtained additional financial support from acquaintances and friends of the cause.

Apparently, Macpherson's vigilance on the building site could sometimes be irritating. On one occasion, he was left

"mortarified" when the contents of a mortar-board "accidentally" ended up on his black suit. He didn't return to the building site that day. The church was opened in 1851, with seating for 300. A gallery for 100 was added a few years later.

Although Macpherson's athleticism may not have saved him from the mortar, it did help in his early years in Stratford when he was asked to preach in nearby communities. More than once, the pastor found the designated meeting place lay not beyond the proverbial river, but beyond small lakes of muck and mire. He had to use a jumping pole to cross o'er.

The next two decades were years of considerable growth in Stratford. This growth, coupled with the merging of the United Presbyterian Church with the Free Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, soon led to the need for a new site and a larger church building. For the third time in his ministry, Macpherson was in the forefront of the construction of a new Presbyterian church.

In one of the few instances where Macpherson's opinion did not prevail, the new church was named Knox, and not St. Paul's as he had suggested. It opened in 1873, complete with a 63-metre steeple that American President William Howard Taft called "the most graceful and pleasing" he had seen in all his travels. Sadly, it was struck by lightning in 1913, and the church was destroyed in the consequent fire. The current Knox Church stands on the same site.

Thomas Macpherson was a minister of the old school. His sermons, like the man himself, were models of godly piety. He was respected and honoured by his fellow ministers and was elected Moderator of the Canada Presbyterian Church in 1874. After he retired in 1877, he continued to have an active role in the life of the church. When he died in 1891, he did so with the same faith and steadfastness he carried throughout his life. "I am happy," he said, "happy to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better." **R**

Based on a report by Ian McPherson of Victoria, great-grandson of Thomas Macpherson.





Terror Transformed

There is an old warehouse in East Berlin. It was bombed by British and American pilots during the Second World War, so that only half the building remains standing. The socialist government of East Germany did not bother to restore or tear down the warehouse; so, for 50 years, it has stood as a ruin.

You can still see machine-gun bullet holes in the front wall from the street fighting during the war. Jagged floors jut out from half-rooms with no ceiling and only partial walls. Tumbled rocks pile against the walls still remaining.

Now, however, the ruin — while still a ruin — is a place of beauty.

Since the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the building has been a hang-out for squatters. As East Berliners gradually redecorated and renovated around them in the wake of reunification, the squatters — often artists, street people, musicians, “alternatives” — did their own redecoration. Brilliant, multicoloured graffiti coats the building, especially the one inner wall left standing and the passageway from the street to the inner courtyard. Scaffolding props up some of the less sturdy areas and floodlights are affixed to the broken walls. The half-rooms have become cafés, clubs and off-beat art galleries. The courtyard — filled with sculptures made from the wrecks of old cars, twisted bits of metal, construction discards and the ever-present graffiti — hosts bizarre, highly political, alternative theatre.

In the words of my German friend, a place of terror has been transformed into a space for art and beauty. That beauty,

though, doesn't coat over the building's history — indeed, it emphasizes the way the ruin serves as an ever-present and highly visible reminder of the terror of the past.

The place has become more popular lately. Tourists and more mainstream

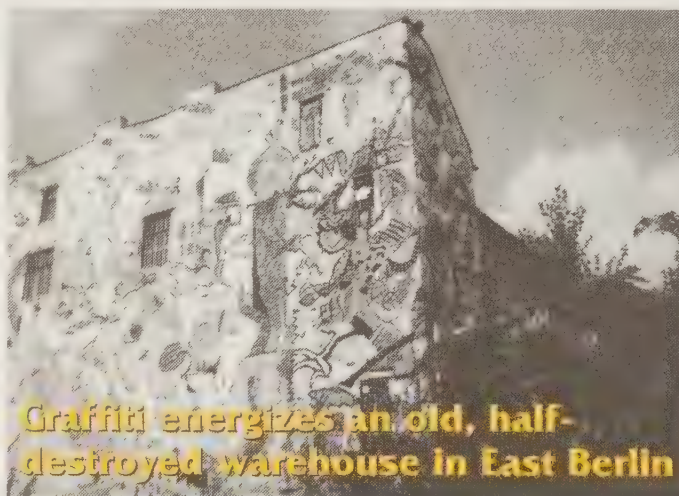
ly unorganized and non-institutionalized nature, the place holds an indescribable authenticity; that authenticity will be lost the instant it becomes formalized and legitimized. It may become more pleasant, more accessible, less edgy; it will also be less real.

I think the same thing happens in the church. A frighteningly off-beat, radical, long-haired-tattooed-motorcycle-driving group with weird ideas about religion suddenly sets up shop in a couple of old buildings around Jerusalem and Rome, and the energy they bring is palpable. They are exciting, dynamic and in-your-face. They are trouble-makers, illegitimates, unauthorized squatters who spray-paint sparkling graffiti on the walls of the centuries-old temple. When they become authorized, legitimized, they subject themselves to the authorities and their rules; then, their message, their splashed graffiti, gets whitewashed.

Not many Presbyterians today would spray their beliefs in sharp-cornered, silver letters on their buildings — either metaphorically or otherwise. Not many churchgoers would thumb their noses at conformity and authority and make wonderful and bizarre sculptures out of twisted bits of metals or worn-out theologies.

The cross is like that building in East Berlin — a symbol of terror that has become a symbol of love and faith. But, rarely, if ever, do I feel the kind of vitality and conviction of belief in our churches that I felt in the courtyard of that old warehouse. When we rediscover that energy, our churches will be filled and our souls will be afire.

But we won't do it through institutions. **R**



groups are showing up in greater numbers, and the classy, bourgeois Freidrich-strasse area is starting to encroach on the alternative district around the warehouse. A couple of developers have talked about taking over the building and legitimizing it — renovating it to fit the newly stylish areas of the booming East Berlin.

If that happens, of course, the place will lose its energy, its authenticity. The message it sends as a symbol of terror transformed into beauty will be sugar-coated and washed out at best, bulldozed under and forgotten at worst.

The graffiti-covered factory made a strong impression on me. At first, I thought I would write about it as a metaphor for a destroyed life — the way some people manage to turn their bombed-out lives into places of beauty. But it was the energy, the vitality of the place, that struck me most strongly. In its non-legitimized, unauthorized, complete-

Kathy Cawsey recently received her M.Phil. degree from Oxford University, England. E-mail Kathy at kcawsey@hotmail.com.

Tony Plomp



An Age-Old Question

How do you deal with gifted and capable older people who say, "I've done my bit — It's time for younger people to take over the church"?

I am sure there are many older people in our congregations who are gifted but no longer capable of providing leadership in the church. The years have caught up with them. They are in frail health. They feel very tired. Now, they need the love and care of a younger generation. Not only do we need to respect this fact, we also need to organize ourselves in our congregations to give reality to that love and care in both word and deed.

Yet, there are also older people in our congregations who are not only gifted but also still capable of giving leadership in the church. Of course, it depends how one defines "older." Some people are "old" by the time they are 50. Others are still "young" at 70, in terms of both their health and their "heart." I know of a number of folk well into their 80s who are full of vim and vigour and still contribute enthusiastically to the life of their church and community.

I recall my own father who, in his 65th year, served on session, was a representative elder to presbytery, may also have been on the board of managers and, believe it or not, led a youth group of some 15 loyal young people who were in their early and mid-teens! In fact, he died after suffering a stroke while leading the service of worship with the young people the first Sunday of June 1966.

Although he was close to achieving the designation of "senior citizen," my father remained young at heart and an enthusiastic and vigorous participant in the life of his church and community, keenly interested in helping to provide

spiritual foundations for members of the younger generation. I suspect that, if he had lived beyond his 64 years, he would have ended his work with the youth within a number of years. Yet, I also believe he probably would have continued to serve as an elder and to help around the church in whatever manner he could. I suppose there might also have come a time when others in the congregation might have wished for his retirement from church activities! The highly committed and energetic sometimes have difficulty letting go and, so, become an obstacle to the enlistment of younger folk in the leadership of the church. From what I remember of my father, however, I believe he would have known when to quit.

I guess the answer to the sort of thinking revealed by this question is that there is never really an end to our participation in and support of the life and work of the congregation. I salute the older people in the churches and volunteer organizations of this land who, while ready to step down in favour of younger people, nevertheless always remain willing to fill in any gap when there is no one else to do the job. Recently, one of our older women in her mid-70s volunteered her services as a church school teacher on an interim basis when she knew we were having difficulties filling a vacant position.

I think it is fair for someone, after many years of involvement, to say about a particular area of service, "I've done my bit..." After all, a change is as good as a rest! That is different from someone who backs out of all participation on the basis that "It is time for the young people to take over the church." **R**

Please send questions for Rev. Tony Plomp to e-mail: TONY_PLOMP@bc.sympatico.ca or to 4020 Lancelot Dr., Richmond, B.C. V7C 4S3.

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CLASSIFIEDS

ASSOCIATE MINISTER: St. Andrew's Church, Newmarket, seeks an Associate Minister. Special focus: Christian education and developing a vibrant ministry for and with youth. Send profile to chair of search committee: D. Hamilton, St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, 484 Water St., Newmarket, Ontario L3Y 1M5, or e-mail: MSRochon@netcom.ca.

ATTENTION MUSICIANS: Mississauga Christian Symphony Orchestra invites musicians to join in its fall season. Contact Robert Hamilton, director, at: phone (905) 625-9068, fax (905) 624-3929 or e-mail music@cpic.ca.

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FIRST HUNGARIAN CHURCH, TORONTO, invites you to come and celebrate its 70th Anniversary Service at the church (439 Vaughan Road) at 4 p.m., October 16. Festive Dinner at 6 p.m. Guest speaker: Rev. Ödön (Ed) Seress, Hungary.

ORGANIST/CHOIR DIRECTOR requested for St. John's Presbyterian Church, White Rock, British Columbia. White Rock is 30 kilometres south of Vancouver on the shores of Semiahmoo Bay overlooking the state of Washington and the islands. We are a congregation of over 500 members/adherents, with two Sunday morning services. We seek an organist/choir director who can provide traditional/modern/contemporary musical experiences. For further information, please contact: Rev. John Bodkin, Senior Minister: church (604) 536-9322; home (604) 541-9279; fax (604) 536-9834; e-mail: jvsbdkn@axionet.com.

PEOPLE & PLACES

KNOX FLOS CHURCH, Crossland, Ont., hosted an African Music and Dance evening, featuring the Umoja Christian Fellowship Choir from Hamilton, Ont. Joining in the dancing and singing were Rev. Charles Deograssias, minister of Knox Flos, and his wife, Hyasinter.



THE PRESBYTERIAN MEN of St. Paul's Church, Prince Albert, Sask., are pictured at a recent fellowship evening. The evening get-togethers include guest speakers and supper cooked by two members of the group (operating in rotating pairs).



GRANT CAMERON, a charter member of Greenbrier Church, Brantford, Ont., was honoured by the congregation with a surprise 90th birthday cake. Grant served as elder for 31 years at Alexandra Church, Brantford, and Greenbrier, including five years as clerk of session at Greenbrier. He also sang in the choirs of both churches.



THE CHURCH SCHOOL OF Tyne Valley Church, Tyne Valley, P.E.I., raised \$302 in a mission project for the children who live in the Guatemala City dump. Pictured (L to R) are: (back row) Heidi Ellis, Josh Darrach, Cori-Ann Craig, Logan Ellis, Taylor MacNeill and James MacLean; (middle) Terrance Darrach, Emma-Sue Craig, Hailey Trowsdale and Madison Ellis; (front) Michael Minard, Ivan MacLean, Stacey Albert and Anne MacLean. (Missing: Craig Williams, Danielle MacDougall and Adam Trowsdale.)



PAULINE BROWN was the guest speaker for a Mission Sunday at Knox's Galt Church, Cambridge, Ont. A luncheon and "open-line" question period were held after the service. Elinor Linton of the WMS presented a cheque for \$2,503 from the Mildred Gehman Fund to Pauline (right) for her work in North India.

Please note: Photos submitted for People & Places must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope if they are to be returned. Also, please try to ensure all pictures are clear and do not include a multitude of people. Colour or black-and-white photos are acceptable, but negatives and slides cannot be used. Thank you.

PEOPLE & PLACES

NINE YOUNG PEOPLE from St. James Church, Chatham, Ont., captured a total of six prizes (one first, two seconds and three thirds) in the Scripture reading classes of the Chatham-Kent Kiwanis Festival. Members of the hard-working team were (L to R): Brittany Van de Wynckel, Dana Serwotka, Ian Beacock, Brock McGregor, Michelle Ball, Charlotte Amelia (first-prize winner), Jordan Charbonneau and Ian Collins. (Not pictured is Stephanie McGregor.)



THE 120TH ANNIVERSARY of Bonar-Parkdale Church, Toronto, was celebrated with a Saturday evening friendship time, an anniversary service and commemorative coffee mugs. Guest speaker Rev. Mariano Di Gangi (left), clerk of session Dorothy Clark (centre) and Rev. Jim Cuthbertson join Penny Boyd (representing Bonar) and Cathie Anderson (representing Parkdale) as they prepare to cut the cake.

TO WELCOME SPRING, Knox Church, North Easthope, Ont., held a "Springfest '99." Members of the congregation performed two humorous skits, "The Rummage Sale" and "The Lamp Went Out." Special guests were the Celtic trio Cavaan. More than \$1,800 was raised for Habitat for Humanity. Audrey Rutherford (left) and Mary Lichty are pictured in a scene from "The Rummage Sale."



THE SESSION of West Vancouver Church, West Vancouver, B.C., recently adopted term service for elders. A pot-luck dinner for elders who retired in 1999 was held at the home of a session member on May 18. Rev. Cathy and Rev. Ian Victor (right) congratulate the five retirees — (from left) John Pearson, Kay Clark, Don MacDonald, Jean Rumohr and Jack Hegeman.



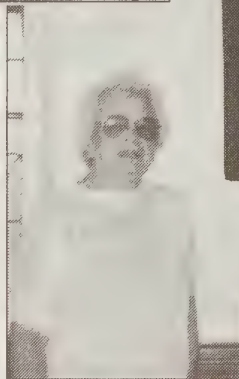
AN EVENING OF PRAISE celebrating the 150th anniversary of St. Andrew's Church, Barrie, Ont., on May 1 ended with the unveiling of a sesquicentennial quilt. Doing the honours was Rev. William Klempa, Moderator of the 124th General Assembly, assisted by Ruth Millar (centre) and Cheryl Anderson, part of the group of women who designed and created the quilt. More than 300 members of St. Andrew's, including children, signed the quilt, which is currently hanging in the sanctuary.

PEOPLE & PLACES

A CANADA DAY KIDDIE CARNIVAL held by Gateway Community Church, Toronto, provided three hours of old-fashioned fun for close to 400 children and parents from the congregation and community. There were hotdogs and drinks, games, face-painting by clowns, a Mad Scientist and a penny auction (with paper pennies) — all for free.



A YOUTH LEADERSHIP RETREAT organized by the Presbytery of Edmonton-Lakeland was held at Camp Kannawin, Sylvan Lake, Alta., this past spring. Spencer Edwards, synod youth consultant for Southwestern Ontario, was guest speaker for the weekend event. All 19 youth participants, pictured along with the five leaders (Erin Walton, Spencer Edwards, Margaret Moar, Don Mackenzie, Jenifer Hislop-Boechler), received certificates recognizing their participation in a training workshop for leadership development in youth ministry.



THE CONGREGATION OF Knox Church, Dundas, Ont., joined with Rev. Don Donaghey and his wife, Bonnie, in celebrating his 25 years of ministry on May 16.



JOYCE VAN DAM stands next to the wall hanging she made for Pentecost Sunday at Knox Church, Tiverton, Ont.

THE CONGREGATION OF Malvern Church, Scarborough, Ont., said goodbye to clerk of session Eric Leiper, who stepped down after many years of service. Eric and his wife, Irene, recently moved to Mount Albert, Ont. Congratulating them are friends Gladys Nandall (centre), Chan Rawana and Reg Rawana.



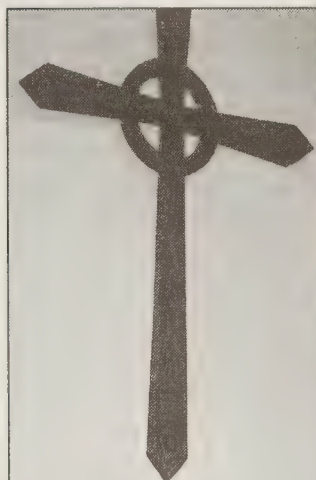
PEOPLE & PLACES

MEMBERS OF THE Evening Auxiliary of First Church, Pembroke, Ont., with 25 or more years of service were recently honoured by the congregation. In the back row (L to R) are: Dawn Sutherland, Ruby Whyte, Jenny Carmichael, Janet Mulcahy, Carol Bradley and Astid Harle. In the front are: Kathleen Inglis, Betty Burgess, Barbara Caldwell and Mabel Burns. (Missing: Madeline MacDonald and Elma Davies.)



REV. FILIMON SEMENIUK and his wife, Sophia, of the Ukrainian Evangelical Reformed Church in Rivne, Ukraine, were special guests at a mission weekend held at Thornhill Church, Thornhill, Ont., as part of the congregation's 150th anniversary celebrations. During the service, a banner reflecting the weekend's theme and symbolizing the unity in the Spirit across borders and languages was presented to the Semeniuks by Rev. Bob Smith and Carol Bittner, the banner's designer.

A CROSS GIVEN by Aleda McWaters and Mable Maud and families was dedicated in memory of their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wagner at Knox Church, Conn, Ont.



THE SUNSHINE SINGERS, a group of young people from St. Andrew's Church, Lethbridge, Alta., presented a special Mother's Day performance of *A Technicolour Promise*, depicting the story of Noah's Ark.



THE CONGREGATION OF Salem Church, Westville, N.S., was joined by friends and special guests when it celebrated its 150th anniversary with a banquet on May 22 and an anniversary service on May 23. Piper Megan Baird was on hand to welcome the congregation and guests to the service. During worship, new pew Bibles were dedicated and a plaque was unveiled commemorating the anniversary. The offering was received using the original collection poles. After the service, the congregation gathered for refreshments and a display of artifacts and memorabilia, including a framed copy of the original call to the first minister of Salem, Rev. George Patterson, in 1849.



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MISSION KNOCKS

Taking Our Turn in the Rotation

Tom Dickey

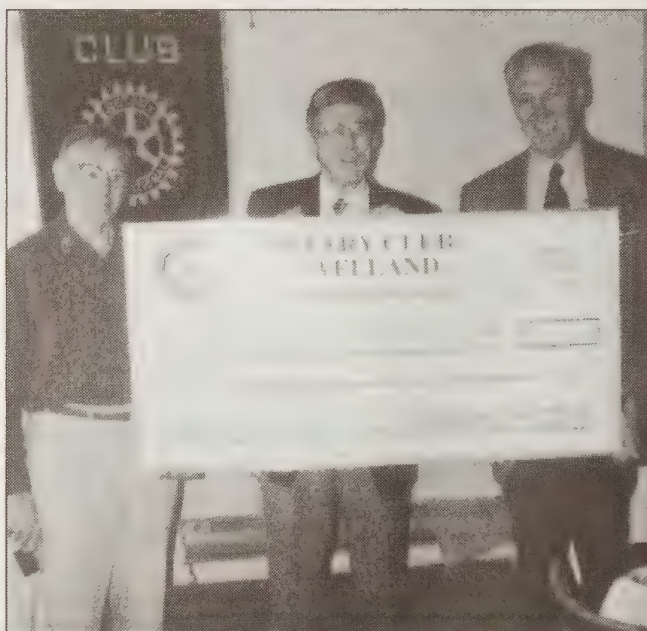
Exc. Oppty: Opportunities available for social justice. Ability to blend Christian belief with community service an asset. Some hard work required. Salary nil. Rewards great.

Have you ever wondered where some people get their ideas for mission? Unfortunately, they can't be found in the classified section of the daily newspaper. They can be found, however, through a familiarity with the daily news and the world around us.

countries of El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic.

The next day, Ken attended a meeting of area Rotary Clubs. He told the Rotarians about PWS&D's partnership with the Canadian Foodgrains Bank and how

any money raised would receive a matching grant of 4-1 from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). For their part, the Rotarians were concerned that any aid sent would actually reach the people in need. The presence of Presbyterian Church workers in Central and Latin America reassured them, and fund-raising plans fell quickly into place. Within a month, six area Rotary Clubs had raised more than \$6,100. With the grant from CIDA, that amount grew



Rotarians Fred Farnham, Ken Jensen and Jim Goldsmith.

For Ken Jensen, an elder of St. Andrew's Church, Welland, Ontario, such an opportunity presented itself when Hurricane Mitch struck Central America last fall. As president of the Rotary Club of Welland, Ken identified responding to an international crisis "with financial support that could make a difference" as one of the goals for his Rotary year. A telephone call to Rick Fee, director of Presbyterian World Service and Development (PWS&D), confirmed what he expected — more money and food were urgently needed for the storm-ravaged

to more than \$24,400.

Opportunities for mission to those in need *can* be identified. And when Christian organizational skills are combined with community service, the results are beyond most individuals' ability to respond. Whether as Christians offering a cup of purified water in Jesus' name or as Rotarians putting "Service Above Self" (or both), we can work toward bringing a little bit of social justice to the desperate corners of the world. **R**

Based on a report by Ken Jensen.



Traveling Mercies: Some Thoughts on Faith by Anne Lamott (Pantheon, 1999, \$33.95). Reviewed by Ken Borden.

This is an encouraging story for mainline Presbyterians. Anne Lamott tells of her journey into faith and her continued walk with Jesus. She did it in part with the help of a small, urban Presbyterian congregation.

Lamott writes with a sharp sense of humour, most often gently directed at herself as she struggles to understand the meaning of faith in her life.

She never takes herself too seriously. What turns me on about her story is that she sees God at work all along the paths of her life and not only at the point of conversion. In her introduction to the journey called "Overture: Lily Pads," Lamott begins: "My coming to faith did not start with a leap but rather a series of staggers from what seemed like one safe place to another.

Like lily pads, round and green, these places summoned and then helped me up while I grew.... I can see how flimsy and indirect a path they made. Yet each step brought me closer to the verdant pad of faith on which I somehow stay afloat."

Lamott was raised by parents who, if not anti-Christian, were certainly condescending and demeaning. She fell early prey to alcohol and drugs, and became bulimic and unwise in her sex life. For some of us, it would be easy to see God loving the new and hating the old, and to deprecate that past life. Lamott understands that, as God has loved her all along, so she, too, loves the person who was hidden behind all those dodges. She never stoops to self-condemnation.

A second strength of her story is that,

having decided to walk with Jesus, she realizes the difficult part of the journey has begun. Learning to trust was not easy. She learned to walk with her new Christian friends who sustained her faithfully on her trip and, at the same time, she continued to love and converse with her many secular friends. She found God present in both as they helped and aided her.

The chapter "Forgiveness," alone, would make the purchase price worthwhile. "They say we are not punished for the sin but by the sin and I began to feel punished by my unwillingness to forgive." What follows is a humorous yet moving vignette of a person learning to forgive.

Let me offer a caveat. I do not know whether to say the story has something for everyone or to say the story has something to offend everyone. There is a part of our church for whom the whole idea of a person coming to accept Jesus as personal Saviour and Lord is trite if not frightening. For some, it signifies a capitulation to dead orthodoxy and the checking of one's intellect at

the faith door. But, for Anne Lamott, coming to terms with Jesus deepened her sense of feminism and her commitment to liberal politics. That may be scary for the other wing of the church that cannot distinguish between a conservative theology and a right-wing political agenda. Lamott makes no bones about her personal encounter with Jesus, and the role of prayer and the faith community in her daily life. It is that personal core faith that sustains her other commitments.

I enjoyed Lamott's book. My congregation has heard her quoted already in sermons and, no doubt, will hear her again. She turns some delightful phrases. A final word from Lamott: "Here are the two best prayers I know: 'Help me, help

me, help me' and 'Thank you, thank you, thank you.'"

Ken Borden is a minister at Calvin Church, Toronto.

The Virtues of Aging by Jimmy Carter (Ballantine, 1998, \$16.50). Reviewed by Bert Vancook.

Jimmy Carter is the Robert Stanfield of American politics. He has a public image as a fine gentleman, perceived to be too earnest and too scrupulous to do what is necessary to lead a nation. While in office and afterwards, Carter made lots of people uncomfortable by responding to public and private issues with his personal Christian faith.

In *The Virtues of Aging*, Carter uses the examples of himself and his wife, Rosalynn, as they move into their 70s to speak of the issues around aging. I couldn't help but think that Carter has some major advantages over many other seniors — the biggest of which is that he can open any interesting door by giving his name. He has a fulfilling life that includes teaching at a university, founding and overseeing The Carter Center which is a public policy think-tank, and The Atlanta Project in which he has used his name and influence to attack the social problems caused by poverty. Rosalynn was also asked to teach at a university. They are on the board of Habitat for Humanity. It is a little difficult to speak to and on behalf of retirees who do not have Carter's advantages.

Having said that, Carter opens up important areas for consideration in this book: health care, preparation for retirement, how to deal with waning energy and increasing family, how to cope with regrets. He writes clearly and well. The overriding sense that comes from him is the essential truth that people who are retiring (and everyone else) have to be willing to try new activities and new ways of living. It would be too simple to say that



"attitude is everything," but a positive approach certainly makes a difference.

While Carter has a few advantages over the majority of seniors, we're all getting older. This little book is a thoughtful look at the difficulties and the blessings of the aging process. It is intended to serve as a discussion starter or as a basis for a seminar series. It will take a bit of translation into the Canadian context, especially with regard to health care and social services; but, as an introduction to the subject of aging, it serves well.

Bert Vancook is the minister of St. Andrew's Church, Thunder Bay, Ont.

A Gospel for the Mature Years: Finding Fulfillment by Knowing and Using Your Gifts by Harold G. Koenig, Tracy Lamar, Betty Lamar (Haworth, 1997, \$32.75). Reviewed by Peter Bush.

"This book is written for middle-aged and older adults who wish to grow emotionally and spiritually, and experience satisfaction and joy in their mature

years." Designed as a study guide, for either group use or personal study, the book walks people through the big questions of life: Who am I? What is the purpose of life? What am I supposed to be doing with the rest of my life? Citing a study that indicates 40 per cent of those over the age of 65 experience a major change in their religious faith after the age of 50, the authors strive to express the core truths of the gospel in ways that speak to adults near or having passed retirement. At the heart of this argument lies the contention, "Aging has a way of thrusting us out of our comfort zones and into a growth mode." This growth is both vertical, our relationship with God, and horizontal, our relationships with other people. Rejecting focusing on one's self as the way to achieve fulfilment in life, the book calls those of mature years up into advanced age to use their God-given gifts to serve God and human beings.

Peter Bush is the minister of Knox Church in Mitchell, Ont.

Spiritual Care Among the Very Elderly by George W. Strong (*Eccumenical Ministries*, 1992, \$10.50). Reviewed by Peter Bush.

For over 20 years, the author was a chaplain in nursing homes, retirement residences and hospitals, ministering with the very elderly. The centre of his argument is that the church has largely ignored the spiritual gifts and ministry skills that those over 80 years of age bring to the church. The book is a plea not to ignore this group of people. Practical suggestions about how to minister with this age group are also presented.

I Know God's in Here Somewhere: Devotions for Groups or Individuals by Gwyneth Whilsmith (*Desktop*, 1999, \$15). Reviewed by Peter Bush.

This is a gem of a book. Over and over again, Gwyn Whilsmith helps us see God at work in the ordinariness and everydayness of life. Here, we meet Gwyn and

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people who have touched her life. People like the child who gives us the title of the book. Jeannie, a child of about seven with a mental handicap, was with the Whil-smiths on a day trip. They were talking about God when Jeannie chimed in with, "God is everywhere — he's even in this car." Then, looking around the interior of the car, she said, "I don't know where he is, but I know God's in here somewhere."

Even more important than the people we meet is the fact that we meet God. Gwyn shows us God at work even when God seems hidden. Be it in the gritty and grimy realities of spring-cleaning or being with a friend through the fear and uncertainty of cancer treatments, Gwyn points to the signs of God's presence.

There are 58 devotions in this book, each beginning with a Scripture passage (the key verse or verses are printed). Then follows Gwyn's reflections on the Scripture. Often, it is a story from her life or a friend's life, which she uses to help us see the truth of the Bible passage in the lives of everyday people. The meditation is fol-

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lowed by two or three questions that move us beyond learning what God is doing in someone else's life to looking for what God is doing in our lives. It would be easy to skip over the questions, giving them only a quick read. But the questions are important. Gwyn asks us to walk into our lives with eyes open to finding God. There is space to make notes about where we find signs of God's presence. Each devotional ends with a printed prayer.

This book could be used for personal devotional times or with women's groups and other church groups. In group contexts, it would be particularly important to give people time to think and talk about the questions. In that process, people would have a chance to talk about God's presence in their lives and hear about God at work with their friends and neighbours.

Book Brief

Full Circle: Spiritual Therapy for the Elderly by Kevin Kirkland and Howard McIlveen (Haworth, 1999, \$29.95).

Howard McIlveen, a graduate of Knox College, Toronto, serves as the pastoral care co-ordinator at Vancouver's Richmond Hospital. He has collaborated with Kevin Kirkland, a music therapist at the University of British Columbia Hospital in Vancouver, to write a book on spiritual therapy in treating elderly patients with cognitive disorders.

The book is divided into 70 themes under five categories: feelings, life review, sensory, special occasions and spiritual. For each theme, the authors suggest hymns and secular songs, stories, questions for discussion, one or more sensory cues and a prayer. The lesson plans can be used in both group and individual sessions.

This book provides a practical resource for those who wish to relate in a helpful and therapeutic way to cognitively impaired, elderly people.

ArithmeCode by Dave Mitchell

Find the value of each symbol by doing the arithmetic. Replace each symbol with the letter which corresponds to its value to find the *ArithmeCode* word below. Category: CAIN'S SON

- i $(2 \times 3 \times 5) - (3 \times 3 \times 3) = \square$
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- iii $\bullet - (200\% \text{ of } \square) = \blacklozenge$
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- v $(\blacksquare \times \square) - (\blacklozenge \times 5) = \blacklozenge$

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
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ArithmeCode answer from last issue: FLOCK

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Retreat Camp

When I say, I wouldn't take the top bunk
My husband says, do you think
you couldn't get up there?
And I start to say, of course I could
and realize, maybe not.
I was the stout woman poet
walking with her handbag
down the trail toward the pond.
Well, I didn't think he even saw me,
thought myself invisible.
No, I don't think I could get up there,
though I am always surprised
when a sudden pull doesn't send me flying
Up the ladder, up the tree, up.
Every year has added more than pounds,
has added distance between the leap of thought
and the sluggish body. Maybe that's how it is:
the soul really just takes off,
looks down at the old shell astounded.
Maybe it's those muscles I should exercise,
flex them, pump them, work them
under the heart's tough skin.

— Janet McCann

DEATHS

BLACK, REV. DOUGLAS, 72, at Brantford, Ont., July 11, 1999. He is survived by his wife, Helen (Roberts); son James and his wife, Linda, Cambridge, Ont.; and daughters Karen and her husband, Stuart Summers, Brantford, and Joanne and her husband, Jason Adamick, London, Ont.; and grandchildren Robert and Heather Black and Jordan and Kalena Summers. He was predeceased by his son Robert (1982).

He served as a student-missionary at Cranberry Portage, Manitoba, and stated supply at Rockwood and Eden Mills, Ontario, while a student. He graduated from Knox College, Toronto, and was ordained by the Presbytery of Hamilton in 1957. His Ontario pastorates were Port Dover; Atwood; Laurel Lea, Sarnia; Greenbrier, Brantford; and Knox, Tiverton. He was a member of General Assembly's Pension Board (1970-76) and Board of World Mission (1981-83) and was moderator, Synod of Hamilton-London (1982).

HUBBELL, GLEN ALLAN, 79, longtime member of St. James Presbyterian Church, Thamesville, Ont., March 18, 1999.

MILLIGAN, CARMAN HILLIARD, M.MUS., FRCCO (Hon.), 1909-1999.

A large congregation attended the service of thanksgiving for the life of Carman H. Milligan, which was held in St. Andrew's Church, Ottawa, on Tuesday, August 17, at 3 p.m. The service was conducted by The Rev. Andrew J. R. Johnston, assisted by The Rev. Dr. Arthur W. Currie, Minister Emeritus, and The Rev. Stephen Kendall, principal clerk of the General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, who represented the church-at-large. The Scripture lessons were read by elders Nancy Pinck and John MacFarlane, and by son, Scott Milligan. The large choir was composed of former members who had served under Carman Milligan during his 47 years as organist and choirmaster of St. Andrew's. The music, which included hymn 535 in the 1972 *Book of Praise*, "When on My Day of Life the Night is Falling," was under the direction of Thomas Annand, the present organist and choirmaster. Carman Milligan was a member of the Committee for the Revision of the 1972 *Book of Praise* that contained seven original tunes written by him and eight tunes he had arranged or harmonized. During his 60 years as a church organist, Mr. Milligan's service included Riverdale Presbyterian Church,

Toronto, and First Presbyterian Church, Edmonton, prior to his distinguished term in Ottawa. It was in Park Baptist Church, Brantford, Ontario, that he met and eventually married Leatta Hainer who has been his constant and loving companion during all of his ministry of music. The church and its music has been a consuming passion in Carman's life. The Presbyterian Church in Canada is most grateful for his service that included the teaching of courses in church music to theological students at The Presbyterian College, Montreal, and Knox College, Toronto. Carman also taught in the Ottawa Technical High School and Carleton University. In recognition of his long and effective service, the Royal Canadian College of Organists awarded him an Honorary Fellowship in 1982. It was his great knowledge of the Scriptures and his spiritual insight that influenced the congregation of St. Andrew's to elect him to the eldership of the church. Following a lengthy illness, Carman Milligan passed away in Carleton Lodge in Ottawa, on Saturday, August 14. He is survived by his wife, Leatta; his daughters, Rosslyn Reed, Apsley, Ont., and Diane Shaughnessy, Manotick, Ont.; his son Scott (Stephanie), Verona, Ont.; his brother Aylmer, in Florida; and eight grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. He is affectionately remembered by the congregation of St. Andrew's and by many choir members for his devotion to the service of God through organ and choral music.

SANDFORD, INEZ "PEGGIE," in her 88th year, former choir leader and first lady of Logan Geggie Memorial Presbyterian Church, Etobicoke, Ont. July 20, 1999.

TOLHURST, JACK, in his 70th year, at Parkville, B.C.; longtime clerk of session, Logan Geggie Memorial Presbyterian Church, Etobicoke, Ont.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES and INTERIM MODERATORS

Synod of the Atlantic Provinces

Little Narrows, N.S.; Whycocomagh, St. Andrew's. Rev. R. Ritchie Robinson, Site 12, Box 4, RR 1, Bras d'Or, N.S. B0C 1B0.

Lower Sackville, N.S., First Sackville. Rev. Cynthia Chenard, Box 2554, Dartmouth, N.S. B2W 4B7.

Merigomish, N.S., St. Paul's; French River. Rev. Charles McPherson, Box 132, Stellarton, N.S. B0K 1S0.

New Glasgow, N.S., Westminster. Rev. Glenn Cooper, Box 1078, Westville, N.S. B0K 2A0.

St. John's, Nfld., St. David's. Rev. Ian S. Wishart, 5 Chestnut Place, St. John's, Nfld. A1B 2T1.

Springhill, N.S., St. David's; Oxford, St. James; Riverview, St. Andrew's. Rev. Mark McLennan, RR 2, Scotsburn, N.S. B0K 1R0. Summerside, P.E.I., Summerside Church. Rev. Christine Schulze, Box 32, Tyne Valley, P.E.I. C0B 2C0.

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Beaconsfield, Que., Briarwood. Rev. Glynis Williams, Action Réfugiés Montreal, 1410 Guy, Montreal, Que. H3H 2L7.

Beauharnois, Que., St. Edward's; Valleyfield, Valleyfield Church (part time). Search Committee, 79 St. Georges St., Beauharnois, Que. J6N 1Y9.

Dunvegan, Ont., Kenyon; Kirk Hill, St. Columba. Rev. Edward O'Neill, Box 7, Maxville, Ont. K0C 1T0.

Fort-Coulonge, Que., St. Andrew's; Bristol, Bristol Memorial. Rev. Ruth Syme, Box 1983, Deep River, Ont. K0J 1P0.

Ingleside, Ont., St. Matthew's (part time). Rev. Ian MacMillan, 18220 S. Branch Rd., Cornwall, Ont. K6H 5R6.

Iroquois, Knox; Cardinal, St. Andrew's and St. James. Rev. Ian MacLean, PO Box 94, Prescott, Ont. K0E 1T0.

Montreal, Chambit Church. Rev. Barry Mack, 496 Birch Ave., St. Lambert, Que. J4P 2M8.

Montreal, Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul. Rev. J.C. McLelland, 121 Alston Rd., Pointe-Claire, Que. H9R 3E2.

Montreal, Knox Crescent Kensington and First. Rev. Richard Topping, 3415 Redpath St., Montreal, Que. H3G 2G2.

Montreal, Korean. Rev. John Kim, 298 Rudar Rd., Mississauga, Ont. L5A 1S3.

Pierrefonds, Que., Westminster (part time). Rev. James Douglas, 1345 Lapointe, St. Laurent, Que. H4L 1K5.

Synod of Toronto and Kingston

Ashburn, Burns. Rev. Andrew Allison, Box 138, Leaskdale, Ont. L0C 1C0; (905) 852-1171; e-mail: leaskdalepres@interhop.net.

Bermuda, Hamilton, St. Andrew's. Rev. Nora Gorham, 69 Rowanwood Ave., Toronto, Ont. M4W 1Y8.

Bolton, Caven. Rev. Issa A. Saliba, 9846 Keele St., Box 5097, Maple, Ont. L6A 1R6.

Bowmanville, St. Andrew's. Rev. David McBride, PO Box 311, Port Hope, Ont. L1A 3W4.

Brampton, St. Andrew's. Rev. Peter Barrow, 38 Edith St., Georgetown, Ont. L7G 3B1.

The Transitions column welcomes announcements of special events such as births, marriages, anniversaries, baptisms and the reception of new members, as well as death notices. The rate is 90 cents per word or \$43 per column inch (the lower amount) plus GST.

All notices of pulpit vacancies, recognitions, ordinations and inductions will be charged to congregations: \$10 for the basic notice and 90 cents per word for additional information. (There will be no charge to congregations on the Every Home or Club 50 plans.)

TRANSITIONS

Cambridge, Knox's Galt. Rev. Kevin Livingston, St. Andrew's Hespeler Church, 73 Queen St. E, Cambridge, Ont. N3C 2A9.

Collingwood, First (associate minister). Search Committee, 200 Maple St., Collingwood, Ont. L9Y 2R2.

Guelph, Knox. Rev. Linda Bell, 2 Cross St., Elmira, Ont. N3B 2S5.

Hillsdale, St. Andrew's; Craighurst, Knox (half-time). Rev. Tim Purvis, Box 26, Stayner, Ont. L0M 1S0.

Kitchener, Calvin. Rev. Angus Sutherland, Central Presbyterian Church, Queen's Square, Cambridge, Ont. N1S 1H4.

Kitchener, St. Andrew's. Rev. Murray Laurenson, 360 Tower St. N, Fergus, Ont. N1M 2N7.

Oakville, Knox Sixteen. Rev. Wayne Baswick, 36 Campbell Dr., Brampton, Ont. L6X 2H7; 905-456-1727.

Parry Sound, St. Andrew's. Rev. Raye Brown, 1 High St., Huntsville, Ont. P1H 1P2.

Sutton West, St. Andrew's. Rev. Margaret Robertson, 50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, Ont. M3C 1J7; (416) 441-1111; mroberts@presbyterian.ca.

Toronto, All People (Mahn-Min). Rev. In Kee Kim, 3625 Haven Glenn, Mississauga, Ont. L4X 1X7.

Toronto, Gateway Community. Rev. Robert Syme, 19 Queensbury Ave., Toronto, Ont. M1N 2X8.

Toronto, Grace (Etobicoke). Rev. William Adamson, 299 Mill Rd. #902, Etobicoke, Ont. M9C 4V9.

Toronto, Knox (Spadina). Rev. Bob Fournay, 1 Glenview Ave., Toronto, Ont. M4R 1P5.

Toronto, Patterson. Rev. Gordon Fish, 15 Lambeth Rd., Toronto, Ont. M9A 2Y6.

Toronto, Weston. Rev. Clyde Ervine, 15 Lambeth Rd., Toronto, Ont. M9A 2Y6.

Tweed, St. Andrew's. Rev. Chen-Chen Abbott, Box 118, Stirling, Ont. K0K 3E0.

Whitby, St. Andrew's. Rev. Douglas Rollwage, 140 Guildwood Pkwy., Toronto, Ont. M1E 1P4.

Synod of Southwestern Ontario

Ailsa Craig, Ailsa Craig Church. Rev. John Bannerman, 342 Pond Mills Rd., London, Ont. N5Z 3X5; (519) 681-7242.

Blenheim, Blenheim Church (half-time). Rev. Evelyn Carpenter, 60 Fifth St., Chatham, Ont. N7M 4V7.

Crinan, Argyle; Largie, Duff's. Rev. Jennifer Cameron, RR 2, Glencoe, Ont. N0L 1M0.

Delhi, Calvin; Brantford, Pleasant Ridge. Rev. Warren McKinnon, 619 Northdale Dr., Woodstock, Ont. N4S 5K7.

Dundalk, Erskine; Swinton Park, St. Andrew's. Rev. Pearl Vasarhelyi, General Delivery, Holstein, Ont. N0G 2A0.

Forest, St. James. Rev. Joop Eenkhoorn, 311 Michigan Ave., Point Edward, Ont. N7V 1G1.

Glencoe, Glencoe Church; Wardsville, St. John's. Rev. Kathryn Strachan, PO Box 72, Appin, Ont. N0L 1A0.

Hagersville, St. Andrew's; Port Dover, Knox. Rev. Thomas G. Vais, 117 Argyle St. N, Caledonia, Ont. N3W 1B8.

Jarvis, Knox; Walpole, Chalmers. Rev. Jeffrey Chalmers, 44 Linnigton Trail, Dundas, Ont. L9H 7A3.

Komoka; North Caradoc; Mount Brydges, St. Andrew's. Rev. Dennis Carrothers, 901-700 Wonderland Rd. N, London, Ont. N6H 4V3.

Markdale, Cooke's; Feversham, Burn's. Mr. Rick Eidenmueller, RR 6, Markdale, Ont. N0C 1H0.

Meaford, Knox. Rev. Bill Vanderstelt, Box 86, Chatsworth, Ont. N0H 1G0.

Niagara Falls, Stamford. Rev. Martin Wehrmann, c/o 515 Scott St., St. Catharines, Ont. L2M 3X3.

North Pelham, First; Rockway. Rev. Elizabeth S. Kidnew, 30 Brookbank Cres., Fonthill, Ont. L0S 1E0.

Port Elgin, Tolmie Memorial; Burgoyne, Knox. Rev. Ted Creen, 865 Second Ave. W, Owen Sound, Ont. N4K 4M6.

Sarnia, St. Andrew's. Rev. Thomas Rodger, 120 S. Russell St., Sarnia, Ont. N7T 3L1.

Thamesville, St. James; Duart. Rev. Mary Templer, Box 93, Dresden, Ont. N0P 1M0.

Tiverton, Knox. Rev. Peggy Kinsman, Box 219, Lucknow, Ont. N0G 2H0.

Waterdown, Knox. Rev. Bob Dawson, 2138 Brant St., Burlington, Ont. L7P 3W5.

Windsor, Knox. Rev. W. Scott McAndless, 58 Erie St. S, Leamington, Ont. N8H 3B1.

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Flin Flon, St. Andrew's (half-time, ordained minister). Rev. Margaret Mullin, 1405 Van Horne Ave., Brandon, Man. R7A 1E4; phone/fax: 204-727-4414; e-mail: mullinm@mb.sympatico.ca.

Full-time regional staff position. Rev. Jean Bryden, Search Committee Convener, 808-9th St. NW, Portage la Prairie, Man. R1N 3L3.

Thunder Bay, Ont., Calvin. Rev. Joanne R. MacOdrum, Box 342, Geraldton, Ont. P0T 1M0.

Thunder Bay, Ont., First. Rev. Bert Vancook, 207 South Brodie St., Thunder Bay, Ont., P7E 1C1.

Winnipeg, St. Andrew's (part time). Rev. Henry Hildebrandt, Box 447, Kenora, Ont. P9N 3X4.

Synod of Saskatchewan

Regina, Norman Kennedy. Rev. John Ferrier, 718 Elm Cres. NE, Weyburn, Sask. S4H 0S7; 306-842-2776.

Synod of Alberta

Calgary, Grace (senior minister as of February 1, 2000). Rev. Brown Milne, 10 Var-moor Pl. NW, Calgary, Alta. T3A 0A1; e-mail: milnejb@cadvision.com. Visit our Web site: www.grace.calgary.ab.ca.

Edmonton, Westmount. Rev. Bruce Kemp, 6104 - 148 St., Edmonton, Alta. T6H 4Z5; bkemp1@telusplanet.net; Fax: 780-439-1676.

Lethbridge, St. Andrew's. Rev. Don Hill, 1818 - 5 Avenue S, Lethbridge, Alta. T1J 0W6; e-mail: dhill@mox.chr.ab.ca.

Synod of British Columbia

Vancouver, West Vancouver. Rev. Ted Sivers, 335 7th St., New Westminster, B.C. V3M 3K9; tsivers@planeteer.com.

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A Child's Way

A page to share with the children you love

Written by Karen Timbers,
minister of Elmwood Avenue
Church, London, Ont.

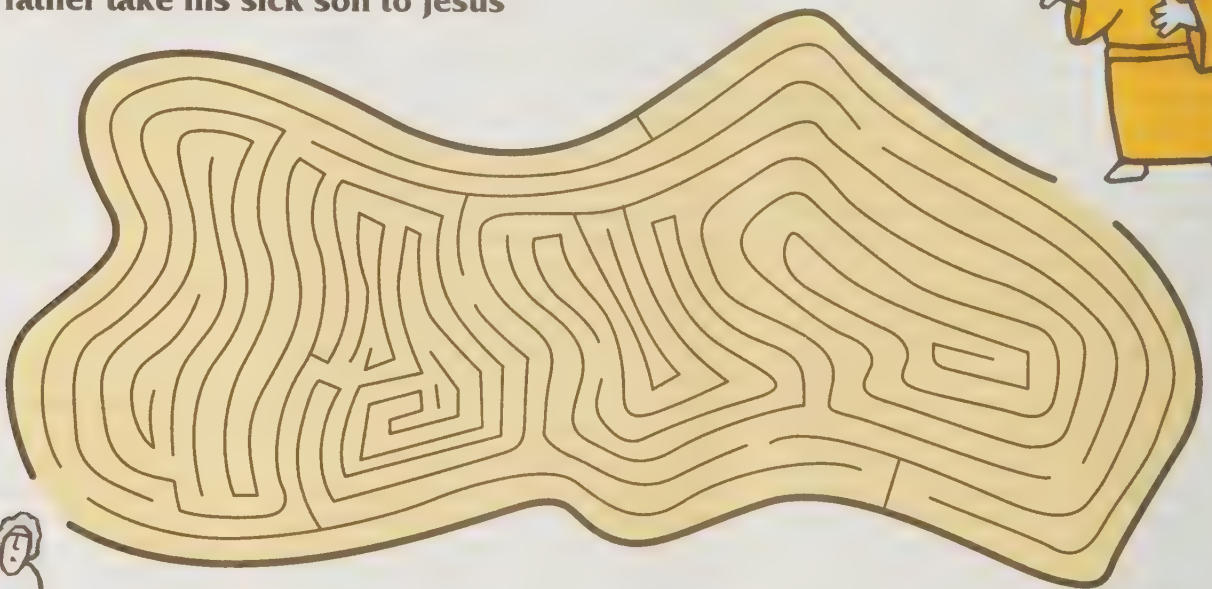
Jesus Heals a Boy With Epilepsy

Scripture Reading: Luke 9:37-43

When Jesus lived on earth, people knew a lot less about sickness. They did not have the same kind of medicines and knowledge we have today. When they saw a boy experience a convulsion caused by epilepsy, they thought an evil spirit was making him fall to the ground. Because they did not understand it, they were afraid.

Jesus knew differently. He said to the boy's father, "Bring your son here." When the boy came, Jesus healed him. All the people were amazed at the power of God and Jesus' willingness to care for this boy. They had been afraid of the boy's sickness, but Jesus showed them by his example they were wrong.

Maze: Help the father take his sick son to Jesus



Questions to consider

1. Why do you think people fear what they do not understand?
2. Have you ever felt uncomfortable when visiting someone who is sick?
3. When you have been ill, what were the most helpful things people did for you?
4. Do you think people still fear certain diseases? How can we overcome such fears?

Activities

- Visit a person who is sick in hospital. Afterwards, talk to someone about any discomfort you may have felt.
- Research the disease of epilepsy. Talk to someone who lives with it and with its daily challenges.
- Make a commitment to visit the same person each month who is unable to attend church due to illness.

A note to adults reading this page:

Many people stricken with diseases still experience the fears and prejudices of others who lack understanding. Demonstrate your own comfort level with those who are ill; a child will naturally learn the same skills.

Prayer

Dear God, help me to care for all people and not to fear them because they are different. Help me to overcome my fears, so I can bring Christ's love to everyone I meet. Amen.

Refuge

Martin Marty

Psalms 121

The gift of simplicity helps those who receive it to weather varieties of circumstances. Those who testify to its benefits like to use language associated with weather. The complex life bewilders those of us who stare at its maps that show many ways of being — until simplicity helps us find *the* way. But then it becomes evident that storms still loom and extremes still threaten along the path.

Today or tomorrow we are likely to be confused by too many commands. Some of us will feel the heat of demands from the boss, the teacher, the spouse, or from the pressures that come from assignments we give ourselves. In that heat, God appears as shade.

Storms arrive. The earth trembles under us in the form of doubt. The clouds of despair gather. The whirlwind and the freezing blast would leave us unprotected. But just when an evil end could result, a promised shelter is realized in the form of the divine love that warms.

Tomorrow, or even today, crags of challenge and hills of exaction will rise in the face of little children of whom much is expected and of seniors who expect too much of themselves. The weary “need a lift” and a means of transport arrives. But circumstances of the day will still throw trouble their way. What to do about that trouble is the live issue. The uncertainties that come with the day diminish when we find refuge from whatever it is that the worst can bring. The One who, we already know, has come as the Good Shepherd also offers his staff on which to lean. With it as security, we walk on what had been uncertain ground with our henceforth more sure steps. **R**

Excerpted from *When True Simplicity Is Gained*, text © by Martin Marty, photograph © Micah Marty, published by Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1998. Used by permission.

**Be unto us a comfort on the way,
a shade in the heat,
a shelter in trouble,
a staff upon uncertain ground.**



Photo: Micah Marty



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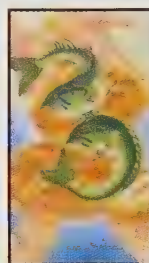
Perhaps that thought has entered your mind as you prayed for the church's work with partners in countries around the world, or maybe for a project in your congregation, or church growth in Canada, or work with homeless people or Christian camping for children and youth. Do you wrestle with this dilemma? Is your passion for God's work sometimes greater than your financial resources to support that work?

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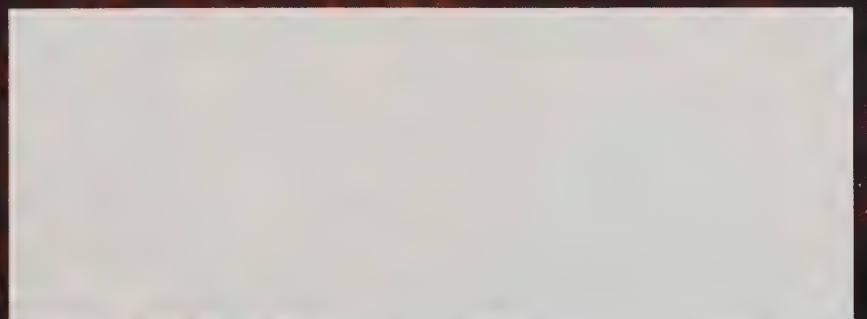
"They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share." 1 TIMOTHY 6:18

UNWRAPPING YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS, 20 • MEMORIES OF GROWING UP IN NAZI GERMANY, 22

PRESBYTERIAN Record

November 1999

Who Is
Jesus?





Words to Haunt Parliamentarians

"This House ... seek[s] to achieve the goal of eliminating poverty among Canadian children by the year 2000."

— **Unanimously passed resolution of the Canadian House of Commons, November 24, 1989**

Disturbing Statistics

Of the 985 congregations in The Presbyterian Church in Canada, 827 have church schools. The enrolment in those 827 is as follows:

0-10	154
11-20	210
21-50	348
51-100	69
100+	46

Estimated congregations with 10 or fewer children attending per Sunday: 500.

— **figures compiled by
Dorothy Henderson**

Death in the Services

A plaque on the church wall with names on it intrigued one little boy. "Mummy," he asked, "who are those people and why do they have their names on the wall?" When she explained that they were members of the congregation who had died in the Services, he asked, "Was that at both the morning and evening services?"

— **James Simpson**

A Little Town

A little town is where everyone knows what everyone else is doing, but they read the weekly newspaper to see who got caught at it.

A little town is where, if you get the wrong number, you can talk for 15 minutes anyway, if you want to.

A little town is where there's hardly anything to do and never enough time to do it.

The small town police officer has a first name. The small town teacher has the last word.

In a class play, there's a part for everyone.

In the town jail, there's rarely anyone.

In the town cemetery, you're still among friends.

— **Paul Harvey, quoted in the Knox Belmore-Bluevale church bulletin**



35 Knox Students Join Guelph Battery Collegians, One-third Theologs, Eager to Get Definitely Into Service

(Special Dispatch to The Globe)

Guelph, Jan. 27 — A most unusual addition will be made to the ranks of the 43rd Battery, which is being recruited here by Col. McCrae. On Monday next it is expected that there will be 35 students from Knox College, Toronto, added to the strength. Twelve of these are taking the theological course at Toronto. The men from Knox have made inquiries through a representative committee regarding the possibilities of the various military units. Artillery being most in favor, the committee familiarized themselves with the conditions governing the raising of new batteries in the Toronto district, under Major Richardson and others. There being no immediate opening in that direction, the men duly considered the move in the University to raise either a University Battery or an Overseas Training Battalion. Since this also appeared a trifle

vague and problematical, the men composing the Knox contingent have arranged to join the Howitzer Battery in Guelph, and will report for duty on Monday, the last day of this month.

To-day the majority of the men were able to face the doctor successfully, and have gone to their homes to arrange their affairs. The following are those who have reported to date: R. D. Turnbull, J. W. McFaul, W. Coutts, A. Lane, H. R. Kay, L. R. Ballantyne, W. J. Patton, R. A. Mackay, J. F. An-

derson, J. C. Lowrie, J. R. Morden, E. J. Spinks, F. A. McLennan, J. D. Doherty, C. G. Jones, G. Hammond, K. C. Downie, W. Sharp, G. Junkin, L. Shier, A. Patterson, E. W. Thompson, H. G. Hanley, W. C. McQuarrie, G. L. Holmes, and Kingsborough.

— **from The Globe, January 28, 1916**

Hitler — A Frightened Man

Martin Niemöller, the German pastor who heroically opposed Adolf Hitler, was a young man when, as a part of a delegation of leaders of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, he met with Hitler in 1933. Niemöller stood at the back of the room and looked and listened. He didn't say anything. When he went home, his wife asked him what he had learned that day. Niemöller replied, "I discovered that Herr Hitler is a terribly frightened man."

— **Walter Brueggemann,
Christian Century**



Encountering Jesus

With this issue, we begin an eight-part series exploring the Presbyterian and Reformed view of Jesus. I believe it will be the most important series the *Record* has done in the decade I have served as editor. We launch the series in Advent 1999 and will conclude it in Pentecost (June) 2000. With it we celebrate the millennium and 2000 years of Jesus Christ.

We often carry the various views and opinions of Presbyterians and other Christians in the magazine. This is not one of those times. We have been careful to select writers who not only have communications skills but who present a view of Jesus consistent with Christian tradition and Reformed witness. An added feature of each article will be a brief reflection by David Goa who, along with theologian Jaroslav Pelikan, is putting together an international exhibit for the millennium entitled *Anno Domini: Jesus Through the Centuries*. Goa is the curator of folklife at the Provincial Museum of Alberta. With each reflection, he will include an image from the exhibit.

Because of the importance we assign to this series, the articles will be longer and, perhaps, require more from the reader than those we typically run in the magazine. Why not? To do less would be to trivialize the central person around whom the Church lives and moves and has its being. But we believe the articles are accessible to the ordinary reader.

We will include questions with each article for your reflection. We hope you will gather others together in your home or church to study these great themes that revolve around Jesus. Many today are not interested in the institutional church but there is intense interest, maybe more than at any time in history, in the person of Jesus. Perhaps this series will provide a way for you to become engaged with those who describe themselves as spiritual but find it difficult to relate to the institutional church.

Stanley Walters, minister of Rosedale Church, Toronto, and former professor of Old Testament at Knox College, Toronto, starts us off this month by introducing the challenge Jesus presents to every human being who encounters him: "Who do you say that I am?" The following schedule will give you an idea of what lies in store for you in the next few months:

December 1999: "Truly God/truly human. Can we believe Jesus is both?" by Karla Wubbenhorst, graduate of The Presbyterian College, Montreal, doing post-graduate work at the University of Aberdeen

January 2000: "In search of the historical Jesus on his 2000th birthday" by Stephen Farris, professor of preaching and worship, Knox College

February 2000: "Jesus and the Old Testament" by Patricia Dutcher-Walls, professor of Hebrew Scripture and the Old Testament, Knox College

March 2000: "Jesus and the Cross. The meaning of salvation" by John Vissers, principal of The Presbyterian College

April 2000: "Jesus is Lord: living in a pluralistic age" by Ron Wallace, minister of St. Andrew's Church, Lindsay, Ontario, and former missionary with the Korean Christian Church in Japan

May 2000: "Discipleship: living for Jesus in the world" by David Kilgour, MP, Edmonton Southeast

June 2000: "Jesus and the Church" by Clyde Ervine, minister of St. Giles Kingsway Church, Toronto.

Presbyterians sometimes neglect the power of the visual. We will try not to overlook this important aspect. For the eight months of the series, we will portray some aspect of the life and person of Jesus on the cover of the magazine. This month's image depicts the mystery of Jesus in Father Jerome Esser's *Christ*. His eyes penetrate our defenses and startle us into an encounter with him. We also invite you to submit children's art on this theme from your congregation. We will use some of it along with the articles and display the rest here at church offices during the 2000-2001 celebrations.

We hope you enjoy and are challenged by this series. We believe it will be a series you will want to treasure, to share with seeking friends and to return to many times in the new millennium.

John Congram

Volume CXXIII, No. 10
November 1999
ISSN 0032-7573

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Published on the first of each month except
August by The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

The *Presbyterian Record*, national magazine of
The Presbyterian Church in Canada, is responsi-
ble to the General Assembly. It exists to publish
issues relative to Christian faith and a selection of
current and timely news analyses and opinions of
interest or importance to Presbyterians across
Canada.

Member of The Canadian Church Press and
The Associated Church Press.

Publications Mail Registration No. 09634
Postage paid at Mississauga, Ontario.
Return postage guaranteed.
Send label only.

Subscription Rates

Individual: \$15
Every Home Plan (80% families subscribe): \$9
Club 50 Plan (50% families subscribe): \$11
U.S.A. and Foreign: \$20
Single Copies: \$2
All prices include GST.

Acceptance of advertising does not imply
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The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Address all correspondence and changes of
address (include label from magazine) to:

Presbyterian Record
50 Wynford Drive
Toronto, Ontario M3C 1J7
Phone: (416) 441-1111
Fax: (416) 441-2825

E-mail: pcrecord@presbyterian.ca
Web site: www.presbycan.ca/record

FROM THE MODERATOR

Arthur
Van Seters



When the Wooden Shoe Is on the Other Foot

When the students at Knox College gave me a T-shirt last April, they didn't know I would be travelling to Ghana this summer. Even if they did, they likely would not have thought about the Dutch connection. The T-shirt in question was to be worn if I were elected Moderator. It was inscribed with the slogan "If you aren't Dutch, you aren't much!" The jesting, of course, was well-intended.

**The Moderator
experienced sadness
and revulsion when
he visited one of the
great white castles
on the Ghana coast
where Africans were
rounded up for
the slave trade**

Then, I found myself on a moderatorial visit to Nigeria and Ghana. Toward the end of our visit, Rowena, Rick Fee and I stood in a great white castle on the coast of Ghana just west of Cape Coast. The place is called Elmina. It was one of many slave castles in West Africa. Elmina was special to the Dutch who had captured it from the Portuguese in a surprise attack by land. The Dutch eventually handed it over to the British. And, yes, some people, in what was formerly called the Gold Coast, sold their African brothers and sisters to the slavers.

A slave castle is a terrifying place. It still echoes with the treacherous memories of human degradation as thousands upon thousands of Africans were herded like cattle into the dungeons. Many died before being transported to Europe, Britain or the Americas. Most didn't make it across the seas, and those who did were slaves for life.

What was additionally offensive was the Dutch chapel next to the soldiers' mess hall. Carved in stone and written in Dutch were the words of Psalm 132:13: "The

(Continued on page 32)



The great white castle on the coast of Ghana,
visited by the Moderator.

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Our Cover

Jerome Esser's *Christ*

In the next issue ...

- Truly God/truly human. Can we believe Jesus is both? The second article in our series
- Nurturing passion for Jesus. The fourth in our series on natural church development
- Should Christians condemn the commercialization of Christmas or view it as an opportunity for evangelism?

14 Who Do You Say That I Am?

Stanley Walters

Getting reacquainted with Jesus:
a Reformed look

The first in a series

20 Unwrapping Your Spiritual Gifts

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Spiritual gifts are God's blueprint for
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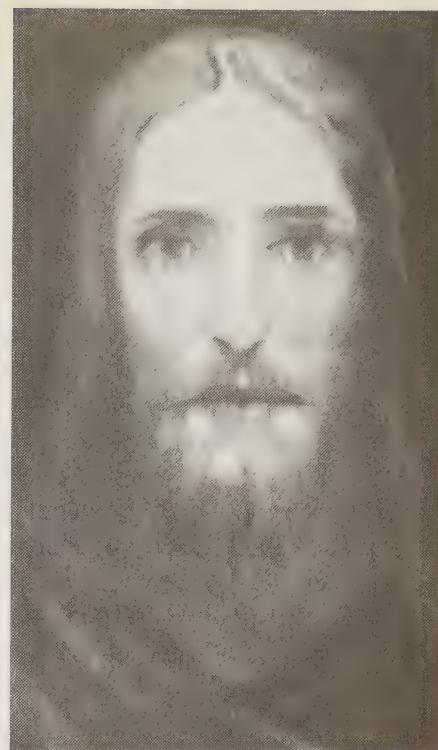
Heather Johnston

Memories of a pastor's daughter
growing up in Nazi Germany

26 Kids Are From Mars, Dads Are From Moose Jaw

Phil Callaway

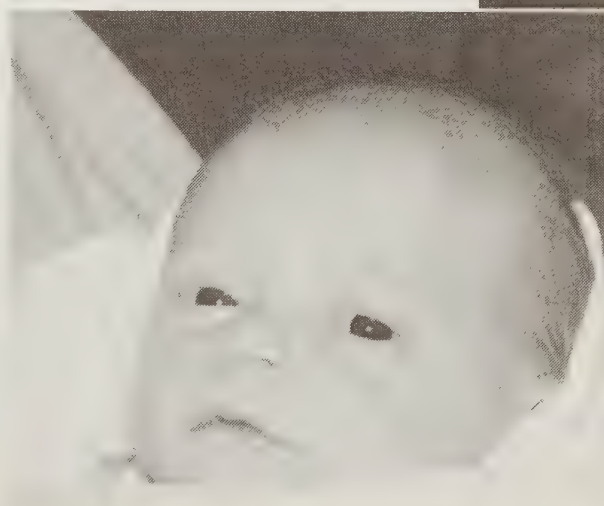
A humorous and poignant look
at faith and parenthood



14



22



26

Remembering the Arrival of the Vietnamese Boat People

I invite the many thousands of my program/project associates in the church to help celebrate the 20th anniversary (1979-1999) of the national sponsorships of the Vietnamese Boat People to our country. This program was conceived and developed while I was doing emergency development projects in India. Upon arrival in Canada, I discussed my plan with Presbyterian Church leaders. They authorized an immediate meeting in Ottawa with the Hon. Bud Cullen, minister of immigration, and top staff to put everything into action. Back in Toronto, I immediately signed up many congregations to inaugurate the national program.

It was later stated the Vietnamese project was one of Canada's most significant and successful immigration efforts.

*Frank J. Whilsmith,
Toronto*

Making Church Accessible

As mother of an autistic daughter, now an adult, I was gratified to read the review of Lucie Milne's book *Portrait of Andrew Who Has Autism* (June Record).

Today, many of our churches have been made accessible to the physically disabled with the provision of ramps and elevators. This should be applauded. However, for the developmentally challenged, the bridge of understanding and acceptance is too often absent.

The June issue also reports on "The Special Friends Club." What a wonderful, ambitious concept.

Let's make it the mission of all congregations to ensure a welcome to families like Andrew's.

*Margaret J. MacIntyre,
Ottawa*

Getting Plugged In

In this Year of Older Persons, congregations are to be commended for recognizing the needs of those who are hearing impaired by installing assistive device hearing systems. Most of these systems are excellent and of great help.

However, I do have a concern. So often, when one is visiting a congregation and asks about the system, there is

confusion. Often, no one knows about the system, or where the head pieces may be found, or whether the system has been plugged in to recharge the batteries, or whether it might be found under a pile of papers on the back window-sill — or whatever!

Please, these systems are expensive. Is it too much to ask that someone be appointed to look after this investment?

*Jane Moncrieff,
Peterborough, Ont.*

Dual Citizenship

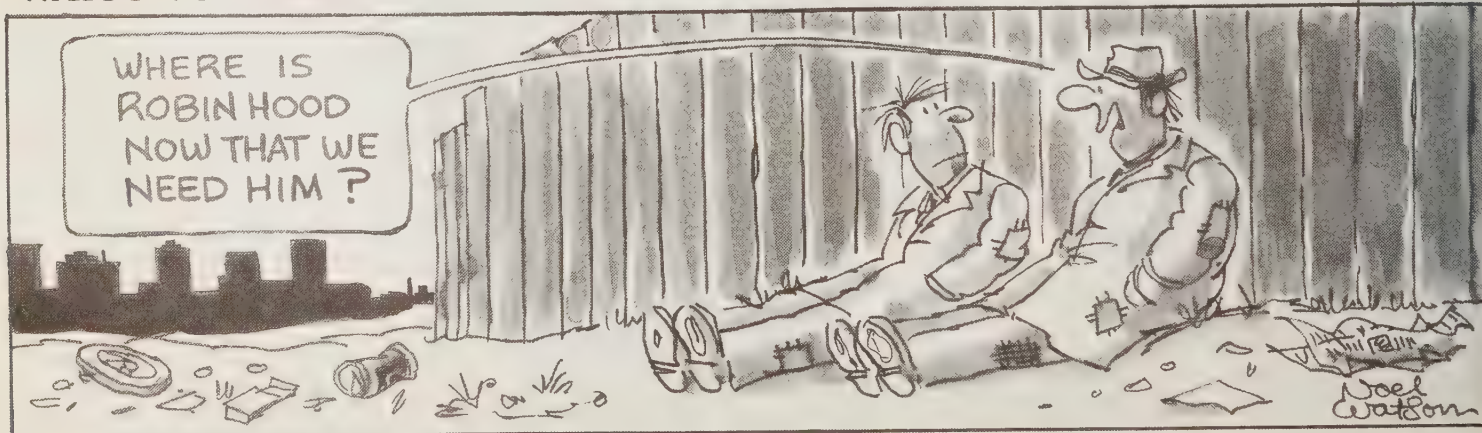
Each Sunday morning, I worship in two churches — a United church at 9:30 and a Presbyterian church at 11. Accustomed to the benefits of "dual citizenship," I enjoyed

Zander Dunn's suggestion (Vox Populi, June Record) that the Presbyterian Church engage in a renewed conversation with The United Church of Canada.

In light of the unseemly disparagement of the United Church in the Sep-

WATSON'S WORLD

Noel Watson



tember Letters (except the one positive response), I think it presumptuous of us to assume the United Church would want us. How delightful it would be to see this matter taken up in the pages of the *Observer*!

Nina Reid-Maroney,
Thamesville, Ont.

I admit parts of Zander Dunn's article make some sense. Yes, you could attend worship with many United Church congregations and not notice much of a difference from Presbyterian churches. Certainly, educational qualifications being in order, the Presbyterian Church accepts ordained ministers of Word and Sacraments from the United Church. But, philosophically, the two denominations are still poles apart.

Why would we want to join voluntarily with an organization that did its utmost to crush us in the immediate post-1925 period? Do we really want to start the conflict that divided congrega-

tions, communities and families all over again? How many people today are aware that, until an amendment was passed by Parliament in the spring of 1939 to The United Church of Canada Act, we were not legally entitled to call ourselves The Presbyterian Church in Canada? At every conference of the United Church until his death, Dr. Albert Moore, the United Church's general secretary, would urge the delegates to launch legal action against us for continuing to call ourselves The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

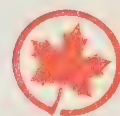
Anyone who is interested in more reasons why we should reject Dunn's proposal should read *The Resistance to Church Union in Canada 1904-1939* by the late Keith Clifford, a United Church minister who taught at Vancouver School of Theology (VST). All the dirty tricks of the Unionists are there. Clifford's book should be required reading for all first-year Presbyterian students at The Presbyterian College, Knox College

and VST. I am certainly prepared to stand up and fight for The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Michael Millar,
Barrie, Ont.

Process Theology

Jim Taylor's September column (*An Everyday God*) marks a sad day for the *Record*. While I'm not one who expects the *Record* to reflect a tight uniformity of opinion on matters, I think Taylor's column on process theology takes us outside the bounds of the Christian faith as the church has historically understood it. His idea of God as someone who learns from us and changes because of us is not a biblical notion of God, but rather the product of some theologians who seem to have little better to do than invent new gods for (a few) people to worship. I had many positive experiences at seminary, but listening for tedious hours to the thoughts of process theologians was not one of them.



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LETTERS

Taylor mentions typesetting in his article. Perhaps the *Record* would be wise to make a few typesetting changes itself in future editions. When sharing ideas like process theology, change the "g" in God from uppercase to lowercase, and place articles like Taylor's September contribution under a section called "extra-Christian speculation." It's a shame that a magazine that publishes some very good articles also publishes such unedifying, fuzzy thinking.

*Carey Nieuwhof,
Hawkestone, Ont.*

My immediate response to Jim Taylor's "Who's Teaching Whom?" was wondering whether to laugh or to cry. Process theology thinks God is evolving and we humans can help God learn and grow. Taylor moralizes, "... if, somehow, God does learn and grow through our experiences, it puts a powerful responsibility on us." Indeed!

Perhaps process theologians could benefit from pondering such texts in Isaiah as these: "You turn things upside-down! Shall the potter be regarded as the clay?" (29:16); "Who has directed the Spirit of the LORD, or as his counsellor has taught him?" (40:13); "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD" (55:8); "... we are the clay, and you are our potter ..." (64:8).

Jim Taylor is correct to say Jesus learned. He is dead wrong to suggest "... then, maybe, God can change too. Maybe God can learn."

Yes, Jesus is the living revelation of the divine God, but the Church teaches he has two natures in one person — an entirely divine nature and an entirely human nature. It was his human nature that learned.

Process theology tries to build a tower up to God. Christian theology presupposes God came down to us. What God has revealed to us through his Incarnate Word — through Christ crucified — is sufficient for kindling saving faith and for bringing peace with God.

*Graham Scott,
Port Colborne, Ont.*

Jim Taylor raises a lot of elemental questions. They are surely unorthodox, but that should not interfere with the thoughts they may provoke. In the vast infinity of the universe, all things are possible, and we may not realize our responsibility as participants in the scheme of creation.

I agree with Taylor's understanding that Jesus was a learner. If we believe he was the Incarnation of God in human form, he had to be a learner or he would not have been human.

The truth in what Taylor suggests is God's identification with us. But I'm sure many find it difficult to think that the one whom we have understood to be Almighty, "God only wise" to quote Paul, has to learn from us. If we presume to think so, we could verge on arrogance. When we dispute this inflexibly in another direction, we could also become arrogant.

If I might make an assumption about the thoughts Taylor presents, the most positive is the idea that we are all involved in creation, and the decisions and actions we choose affect the whole. But, we need to return to forgiveness; otherwise, all is irrevocable. As individuals we return, however the universe might be unfolding, to judgment and mercy.

*George Adamson,
Ennismore, Ont.*

Process theology is radically different from Christianity. It is simply another attempt by rebellious humanity to invent a God in our own image — "... chang[ing] the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man" (Romans 1:23) — in this case, an imperfect God who can learn and grow like us. Any who would be inclined to follow such a God should remember the God of the Bible has authenticated his claims and his power over death by raising Jesus from the dead. There is salvation in no other God (Isaiah 43:11, John 14:6).

Conversely, the God of process theology has no such authentication, but rests only on the whimsical fancies of imaginative but wrongheaded false prophets. Of course, Taylor is free to trust his eternal destiny to such a vacuous God. Meanwhile, the rest of us are left trying

to figure out why the national magazine of The Presbyterian Church in Canada is now publishing outright heresy.

John Tors,
Toronto

Faith and Feeling

Many, I am sure, can empathize with Kathy Cawsey's faith struggle (Generation Y, September *Record*). The last time I conversed with a confessed atheist, we continued our conversation in comfortable terms when I commented that we both had faith: she believed God does not exist, and I that God does.

God chose to limit himself when he created us "in the image of God" and gave us the freedom to choose what we believe. In Kathy's article, she refers frequently to her faith and her feelings. I disagree with her statement that "Faith is belief that comes from the gut."

Psychology teaches that our feelings stem from what we believe and not the other way around. An illustration that has helped me get my faith and feelings in better perspective is a train with the locomotive (*faith*), a coach (*fact*) and a caboose (*feelings*). If we make our feelings the locomotive to pull our faith along, we easily end up feeling lost, alone, confused and inadequate. If we base our faith on the facts that God has revealed in the Bible and in the Living Word, Jesus, we are more likely to find our feelings experiencing the "fruit of the Spirit" — love, joy, peace, power and a sound mind. And, incidentally, history and science verify the facts that God, in his love, has chosen to reveal about where we come from, why we are here and where we are heading.

Kathy is not alone in her struggle. It is a daily challenge. I believe there is room for us and our doubts in the Church, the Body of Christ.

Grace McGill,
Glencoe, Ont.

Whose Job Is It?

Ron VanAuken (Vox Populi, September *Record*) seems to be saying that those of us who keep our children in the public school system are, at best, irresponsible parents and, at worst, somehow not

Christian. Being in a financial position to have the choice to send children to an independent school must be wonderful. As our older son begins Grade 9, we have already forwarded \$90 to his high school for essentials before the first week is over! I have no idea how we could ever afford the costs of independent schools. Does this make us bad Christians?

Our children have been raised from birth in the Presbyterian Church. They attend Sunday school regularly. I have served on committees, and my husband is both a choir member and an elder. I believe strongly that our children learn morals and values from the church and by seeing parents and extended family who love and respect each other. This is *not* the job of the school system, in my opinion.

The public school system does try to teach respect and tolerance for all people in addition to its academic subjects. Surely, we cannot claim these are purely Christian virtues that can only be learned in an independent Christian school? Are we not, in the long run, doing our children a disservice by isolating them from exposure to other faiths and cultures? Is this not the kind of attitude that is causing so much conflict throughout the world? Are we so convinced that Christians (and Presbyterians) have all the answers and are always right? What is so bad about interacting with other faiths? Is VanAuken afraid his children and their particular religious beliefs will somehow be contaminated?

With the support of our faith community, we parents do the best job we can to teach our children to love God and honour his teachings because that is *our* job, not the job of the education system. Expecting our schools to teach them these things is an abdication of our own responsibilities.

P. A. Cox,
Toronto

Correction

A correspondent's name was misspelled in the Letters column of the September issue. The *Record* apologizes to Keith A. Billett.

Fears

crashed in about me. Repairs to the house, an unexpected tax bill, guilt about my parenting skills, relentless pressure at work. I took out a piece of paper and wrote down my concerns — nine in all. Then I suddenly remembered what Jesus said: "Love casts out fear." Fear is the opposite of love! As love increases, so fear diminishes. I made a decision to cast fear out of my life. Love flooded in. If I am fearful as an Evangel Hall worker, how fearful must our clients feel! My mission, I realized, is love. I will practise the habits of my mission — especially when there's something or someone I don't like. I will help the Lord bring love to the world.

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Legal Remedy for Moral Failings?

Nick Loenen

Last year, the Supreme Court of Canada agreed with Delwin Vriend that Alberta's human rights code should protect him and all homosexuals against discrimination. Vriend alleged he was dismissed by The King's College (TKC), a Christian liberal arts college in Edmonton, because of his homosexuality.

Vriend had not sued TKC because, in part, religious organizations may be exempt from certain anti-discrimination measures. However, for supporters of Christian organizations, the Vriend case was a wake-up call. Had Vriend sued TKC for wrongful dismissal, he may have won. The exemption Christian agencies enjoy is not automatic or absolute.

On the basis of legal advice, TKC is now considering imposing a code of conduct on its teaching staff. Some Christian schools have done so; others, particularly in Alberta, are thinking of doing this. The Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC) has recently adopted such a policy for its national board mem-

bers and representatives. Under some conduct policies, such as the one CLAC adopted, Christian organizations may, at their sole discretion, dismiss staff subject to moral failings. Among these failings are lying, swearing, premarital and extra-marital sex, drug and alcohol abuse, and homosexual conduct.

Supporters of such a code of conduct suggest that preserving the Christian character of an organization requires staff and board members who provide examples of strong Christian character and faith in their private lives. Those in positions of leadership should give evidence of their confession, "walk their talk," and not bring disrepute to the organization.

In addition, it is said, the legal climate requires this. Without a code of conduct, faith-based organizations may be forced to hire, or be prevented from firing, people whose behaviour undermines the organization's Christian witness. Given the current legal requirements and, increasingly, less tolerance for an overtly Christian public witness, agencies need a code of conduct to protect their integrity as a Christian organization. In the past, we had the luxury of deciding on philosophical and biblical grounds whether to have a code of conduct and what to put in it. Today, it is suggested, the law and changing public values leave us no choice.

However, adoption of such legalistic codes of conduct is not without debate. There are also arguments on the other side. Since many Christian agencies face this issue, informed discussion is important.

The question is not whether faith-based organizations and schools can hire

Christians committed to upholding the organization's constitution and qualified to meet the job requirements. That is in place now. The conduct policy empowers employers to dismiss employees for moral failings that occur in their private lives outside the workplace even though

these do not adversely affect job performance. Those opposed to such codes of conduct raise several concerns.

First, there are practical problems. The legal advice is explicit. For such policies to have legal standing, infractions must be prosecuted

rigorously, consistently and evenhandedly. If so, how much lying, swearing, etc., can be tolerated before dismissing someone? The prescribed moral conduct must be a bona fide occupational requirement. Is refraining from premarital sex a genuine occupational requirement? If it turns out an organization might hesitate to fire people for any of the listed moral failings except homosexual conduct, the whole policy will be deservedly dismissed as being disguised discrimination against homosexuals.

Second, there are biblically based objections. Jesus never accepted or rejected anyone on the basis of outward behaviour. In fact, Jesus' harshest criticism is directed at those who tried to do that. A list of moral behaviour is the wrong yardstick to measure if someone is a true Christian or not. Even if a list were justified, why this list? Are sexual sins more offensive than economic or other sins?

Third, there are philosophical objections. Are employers qualified to specify what moral behaviour is indicative of a sound Christian character? Surely, one's worship and faith community is a more

Should Christian organizations legally require a moral code of conduct for their employees?



appropriate forum for judging moral failings than one's employer. Are employers entitled to bind the moral consciences of their employees? Is giving employers such authority not an infraction of the freedom Christians enjoy in Christ?

Fourth, addressing moral failings by legal rather than pastoral means, and permitting employers to bind the consciences of employees on moral issues, is driven by pragmatic accommodation to current legal requirements and not on the basis of principles. Our mission is to transform culture. If the law forces on us policies more in tune with Pharisaical legalism than with the grace Jesus preached, why should we accommodate the law and suppress Christ's teachings?

A full-orbed Christian world-view frowns on regulating religion to the private sphere. Accommodating the prevailing mind-set of our culture, which happily sees religion as having relevance only for private moral conduct, is to undermine the very purpose for which Christian schools, organizations and agencies exist.

Fifth, in addition to objections of principle, there are also pragmatic considerations. Increasingly, there is less tolerance in our culture for an explicit Christian social witness through confessionally qualified semi-public institutions. Proponents of overtly legalistic codes of conduct see such codes as a defence, a way of preserving their right to be. Just what we need for these times. But is it? Public opinion will be more supportive of attempts to preserve confessional safeguards that are clearly job-related than attempts to regulate private moral conduct.

Finally, some schools and agencies have policies that list a biblical life-style as the expected standard; others describe God's will as an ideal to strive for. But that is different from specifying certain behaviour as a standard that must be attained on pain of dismissal. If the infraction is failing to attain God's will, who can stand? Moral failings require pastoral solutions, not legal remedies. **R**

Nick Loenen, a former MLA who lives in Richmond B.C., has a long involvement with Christian schools and organizations, including service on the national board of the Christian Labour Association of Canada.



A woman shows off the sweet green pepper growing in her vegetable garden in rural El Salvador.

Imagine you live in a one-room house with plastic sheets for walls. You have no clean water. Your diet consists of corn and milk, and you cook on a wood stove that fills your home with smoke. You cannot read or write, and you have no medicine or access to health care. Worst of all, you have no hope that your situation will change for the better.

This was the reality faced by a community in rural El Salvador before Instituto de Mujer – Women's Institute (IMU) — one of PWS&D's partners — began to help. IMU has helped this community establish vegetable gardens, install eco-friendly latrines and smokeless, fuel-efficient stoves and build a community centre with rooms for a kindergarten, primary school and medical clinic. The children now have a school to attend and, twice a week, doctors visit the community.

More than the buildings, the medical clinic and the basic schooling, IMU has helped give these people the skills and confidence to improve their situation and see a better future for themselves.

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Haunted by the Image of Jesus

Mark 1:1-8

So who is Jesus? No ordinary man, let's get that out of the way. No one ever said he was common, convenient or conventional.

Each of the Gospels takes a different tack. For Mark, Jesus is the long-awaited King who, by his passion and death, redeems the world from evil's powerful grip. For Matthew, Jesus is the teacher of Israel, the Man and King of Israel. For Luke, Jesus is the innocent, forgiving and loving Saviour of the world. John goes the furthest and fastest: Jesus was God made flesh, God's teaching, caring and compassion gift-wrapped in human form.

John the Baptizer was only a prelude to the main act, but his long-ago popularity may still be attested by the Mandaeans or "Christians of St. John." This was a Gnostic sect, still found in small numbers in modern day Iran and Iraq.

What was Jesus really like? It is certain he does not fit into any existing mold. He does not fit into any package of our design. He is not flat or one-dimensional but, rather, multifaceted. His character challenges us; his life and teaching dare us.

Hans Küng reminds us Jesus was not an ascetic monk or a devout moralist. He taught neither a technique of piety nor case-history morality. He was no plaster saint. He was not innocuous or boring nor was he a dispenser of psychological theories. He fits into no formula. He did not belong on the right or on the left. He was closer to God than the religious leaders; he was more moral than the moralists and more revolutionary than the revolutionaries. He was not a gentle, meek and mild, milk toast, bland man. He was crucified. He was deemed a po-

litical peril. He threatened the exponents of the status quo.

When we say "Jesus," we mean the mystery, the majesty, the glory, the excitement, the uneasiness and the security of life in relation to God. An encounter with Jesus is an encounter with his claim about the nature of God, a persistent claim about the overflowing grace of God. An encounter with Jesus is, above all else, an encounter with God.

When we read the Bible, we are left with the mystery of "the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge" (Ephesians 3:19). We can't explain; we can only sing with the

Apostle Paul: "Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!" (II Corinthians 9:15). It has been said that such a man could never have lived and such a man could never have been invented. It is a dilemma, and we have to decide which horn we choose.

We are a people who are haunted by the image of Jesus. He has made an impact on the religions of the world. Consider this sampling of sayings attributed to Jesus that are found on mosques and in the classical writings of Islam:

"The world is a bridge. Cross this bridge but do not build upon it."

"Blessed is he who sees with his heart but whose heart is not in what he sees."

"Be at ease with people but ill at ease with yourself."

"In truth I say to you, those among you who sorrow most in misfortune are the most attached to this world."

"The greatest of sins is when a man says 'God knows I am telling the truth' and God knows he is a liar."

"How many trees there are but not all bear fruit! How many fruits there are but not all are good to eat! How many sciences there are but not all are useful!"

"He who seeks worldly things is like the man who drinks sea water; the more he drinks the more thirsty he becomes until it kills him."

"You shall not attain what you desire except by suffering what you do not desire."

"You disciples are afraid of sin. We prophets are afraid of unbelief."

"Jesus said to his disciples: 'Many a lamp has been extinguished by the wind and many a devout man has been destroyed by vanity.'"

"Jesus was asked: 'Who among men creates the greatest discord?' He answered, 'The error of a religious scholar; if he errs, a whole multitude errs because of him.'" **R**

For Discussion and Reflection

- Struggle with this question: Who is Jesus? Was he an ordinary Joe with a Messiah complex? Is he God with brown eyes and sandals?
- Rent the video *Jesus of Montreal* and reflect on the portrayal of Jesus.
- What is your favourite saying the New Testament attributes to Jesus? Do any or all of the sayings from Islam quoted above seem authentic to you?

L. E. (Ted) Siverns is the minister of First Church in New Westminster, B.C.

My dear editor:

A crisis has arisen at the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul by the Petro-Can. In a way, it is a pleasant kind of crisis, at least when observed from a distance.

This growing suburban congregation, brought about by the merger of two moderately sized churches (with stock options and, wonder of wonders, no downsizing) is ably ministered to by The Rev. Fiona Fitzhenry-Whiteside. The Sunday school is shockingly large.

Each year at this time, there has been a great gearing-up for the Christmas pageant under the direction of Prudence (Pru) Pettibone, an ingenious and, hitherto, patient elementary schoolteacher in real life. Such has been the success of the Christmas pageant (partially, but only partially, attributable to the public schools ban on all things Christian about Christmas) that they have had to hold two performances, one in the church on a Sunday and one in the gym/auditorium on the Saturday night previous.

This not only accommodates all who want to attend but provides for two casts for youngsters who want to perform ... or whose parents insist that they perform. Their pre-pageant publicity always seems to generate a little envy, disguised as theological objection, in some of Fiona's colleagues — such as Joyless John McWhirter, whose own pageant at Gilead Presbyterian last year featured but two wisepersons and cardboard livestock. (There was also some ill-feeling when he insisted the Baby Jesus could not be played by a Hulk Hogan action figure.)

This year, Pru announced her resignation from her directorial responsibilities by way of a note slipped under Fiona's study door. As well as resigning, she announced her intention to spend Christmas in Florida. Attached to the resignation was a list of helpful hints to her successor. Though not many congregations are fortunate enough to find these hints directly applicable, I pass them on to remind churches that many blessings are indeed mixed.

1. It is fruitless to try to reconcile the nativity stories in Matthew and Luke.

(Didn't those guys ever talk to each other?) A good pageant director will be selective or all-encompassing without much regard to a critical study of the text. She/he will find there is criticism enough and plenty to spare elsewhere. *But*, it is imperative, somewhere, to use the second chapter of Luke in the *King James Version*! People who never open a Bible from one Christmas to the next have residual memories of the way "it's supposed to sound."

2. A related matter. It is *not* worth the hassle to try to stage a pageant with a "contemporary" setting, no matter how desperate one gets for change. I thought the script we used four years ago was refreshing. But, though the kids enjoyed it, the parents didn't warm to Mary and Joseph waiting on stand-by for a flight to Bethlehem on his Air Miles card. Or the argument Joseph had with the innkeeper about the foul-up in his reservations made over the Internet. Or, especially, the substitution of the three social workers for the three Magi (Mary was, after all, an unwed, teenage mother).
3. Another related matter. Walk carefully through the minefield of political correctness. Though it is easy in our congregation to honour tradition by finding Magi from three distinct racial categories, it doesn't do to insist on the gender-specificness of *Wise Men*. Magi is a better word. The shepherds should include shepherdesses though they would have to watch more than their flocks by night. ("Sheep persons" sounds like a bad genetic experiment.)
4. Live animals are not a good idea. They can upstage the best in the cast — and not simply by an "accident" that brings an unscripted laugh. The goat that ate not only the straw in the manger but part of the Baby Jesus doll as well is a case in point. Besides, a barnyard menagerie can afford parts for junior thespians who cannot man-

age a single line of dialogue but who, with careful coaching, can baa or moo reasonably well.

5. The Heavenly Host provides another good place to cast surplus participants. The sex of angels has always been a rather puzzling question, so there is no issue there; and those who can't sing can hum or mouth the words.
6. Including the Massacre of the Innocents from Matthew may provide more (and very popular) roles for your Ritalin rangers; but, biblical as it is, parents find it unChristmaslike and disturbing unless accompanied by a 12-year-old. Moreover, the ketchup stains are murder.
7. This one is especially for you, Fiona, and your clergy colleagues. *I* know the Christmas season in the Church Year *begins* on December 25th and runs to Epiphany on January 6th; but, dear, dear Fiona, **NOBODY BUT THE CLERGY CARES** (and, maybe, some music directors)! For the world-at-large, the Christmas season begins after Halloween and ends about noon on Christmas Day. A steady diet of Advent hymns ("On Jordan's Bank, the Baptist's Cry" creates the idea that Christmas is a "prequel" rather like *The Phantom Menace*) means I have to spend more time teaching the carols. That's right! They don't hear them anywhere else. "Christmas in the Crack House" by Thugs R Uz, they know. Today's "Three Kings" are three élitists searching for January sales.

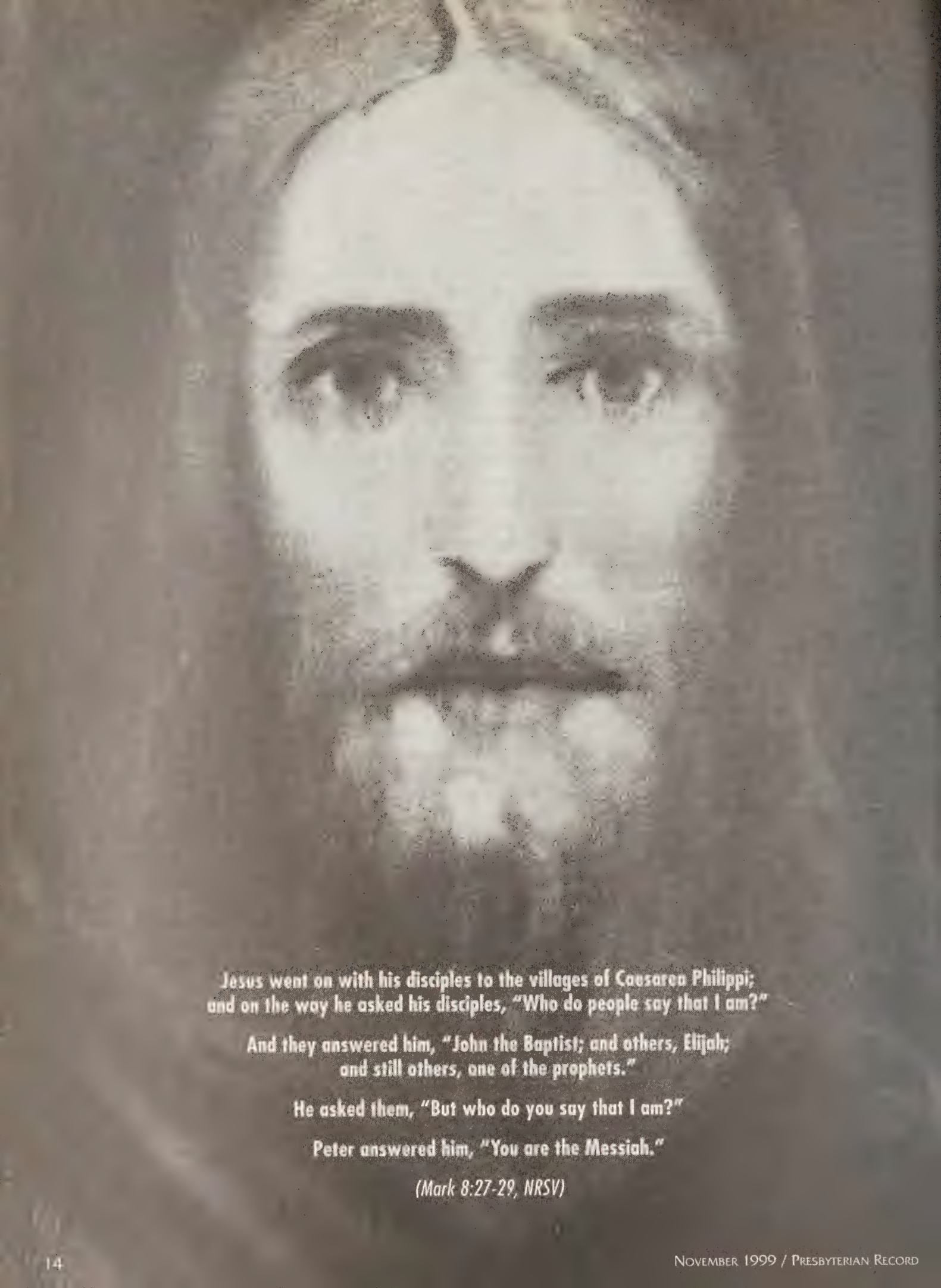
It's time I retired.

Pru

I feel for all those who try to make the old new again (and the new old again, for that matter), don't you, dear Editor?

In Advent mood,

Peter Plymley II



Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi;
and on the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?"

And they answered him, "John the Baptist; and others, Elijah;
and still others, one of the prophets."

He asked them, "But who do you say that I am?"

Peter answered him, "You are the Messiah."

(Mark 8:27-29, NRSV)

Who Do You Say That I Am?

When the Raptors came to Toronto, Isiah Thomas III became vice-president for basketball operations. He grew up on the south side of Chicago, and was a pro star himself after a long time with the Detroit Pistons. Among the people who helped bring the Raptors to Toronto was the former premier of Ontario, David Peterson, who had since become a senior partner in a prestigious law firm.

Two famous people.

When the two met for the first time, Peterson said, "I'm sorry, I've never heard of you."

"It's OK," said Thomas, "I've never heard of you either."

Who is Isiah Thomas? Who is David Peterson? Even famous people may belong to circles that never actually intersect one another. It's part of the immense diversity — some might say fragmentation — in our society.

But there are people who know. When John Bitove Jr. first asked Peterson for help in getting the Raptors, the lawyer said: "Basketball? I don't know a thing about basketball."

Replied Bitove, "Ask your kids."

Who is Jesus? There may be people in your neighbourhood who don't know, but most people have an idea. Let's ask.

"One of the world's great religious leaders, that's who."

Religious impulses are innate in human beings (it will be said); but, without leadership, they often remain uninformed, poorly expressed and unsatisfied. Throughout history, people have arisen who see things more clearly than the ordinary person does, who speak to our religious impulses and call us to a better way of life. The great religions of the world each derive from a leader who spoke to human need in his own time so truly, so boldly and with such winsomeness that people could never be the same. They gathered around in eager discipleship, preserving his teachings and the stories about his work. Even after the leader's death, they gave themselves to the spread of his influence, and the movement that arose became so powerful, so satisfying, that it has never died out. Sometimes, centuries have passed without such a leader; but, again and again, someone arises. I need mention only Moses, the Buddha, Zoroaster, Confucius, Jesus, Muhammad.

Isn't that who Jesus is?

"A timeless guide, that's who."

He may have lived once; indeed, he probably did, but that's not the point.

by Stanley Walters

What really matters is that we can think of him as present to us from time to time, and we can make use of his teachings to help us through today's problems. Of all the great bodies of religious teachings, that ascribed to Jesus is clearly the most original, the most striking, the simplest, the most idealistic and the most humane. If all the world would simply live by the Golden Rule, for example — "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" — life would be far better for all people. Jesus even said that living the

"A heroic martyr, that's who."

From time to time, the conflict between good and evil becomes especially pointed, and evil often seems to have the greater power. Sometimes, people think they must hold to their beliefs regardless of the cost; suffering and death is the result. It happened to Nigerian activist Ken Saro-Wiwa. It happened when Bishop Oscar Romero was gunned down at his altar. Martin Luther King Jr. was a martyr to his dream of racial harmony and equity. In our own country, early mis-

preaching offended the adulterous Herodias. She finally manipulated her husband, Herod Antipas, into executing him. If you see Jesus as John the Baptist somehow returned from the grave, he is a heroic martyr.

Elijah

Here we encounter something time-bound out of Judaism in Jesus' time, and I ask you to bear with me for a moment. Elijah is the most impressive prophetic figure in the stories of the Old Testament books of Kings. He is said to have raised a child from the dead, for example (I Kings 17:20-22), and to have been carried to heaven in a whirlwind without experiencing death (II Kings 2:11). His figure had entered deeply into Jewish thought and hope, especially in the belief that he would come again as a harbinger of the Messiah (first expressed in Malachi 4:5-6). The Gospels tell us some people said Jesus was Elijah (Mark 6:15), and the disciples and Jesus were later to discuss Elijah's "coming" (9:9-13). In several ways, Elijah is still present today in Jewish hope. At a Passover Seder, it is customary to put a cup of wine on the table for Elijah. It is thought that, when he comes, he will decide all disputed questions. He protects the newborn, and a "chair of Elijah" is often placed for him at circumcisions.

That is to say, Elijah had become a free-floating person, transcending history and present in imagination to God's people. If you see Jesus this way, he is a timeless guide.

One of the prophets

This really does make Jesus a name on a long roster — a good man, no doubt, but a prophet among other prophets. Even if he were first among equals, he is still one person in a crowd with no names. If you view Jesus this way, he is one of the world's great religious leaders.

These three views of Jesus are all plausible, and many people worldwide hold them. There is truth in each of them; but, let's ask, What kind of Jesus does each of these give us?

As one of the great religious leaders, Jesus is the man of *then*, the man of flesh

The **Jesus** of history is necessary

The **Jesus** of imagination inspires

The **Jesus** of example draws us on

But what we need is the **Christ** who saves

good life could be stated in only two commandments: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength" and "You shall love your neighbour as yourself" (Mark 12:30-31). He said, "There is no other commandment greater than these." You can't beat that for both depth and simplicity.

Taking those and his other wondrous words, we can ask, "What would Jesus do?" That is, in fact, the subtitle of the famous popular book **In His Steps**. A hundred years ago, a Congregational minister, Charles M. Sheldon, preached a series of Sunday evening sermons in Topeka, Kansas. Each sermon was a chapter in the life of Rev. Henry Maxwell and his town of Raymond. One after another, people of that town sought to make all their decisions according to what they thought Jesus would do. By imaginative appropriation of Jesus and his teachings, they began to transform their town.

Isn't that who Jesus is?

sionaries from Europe were martyrs for their Lord and church. There have been many such heroic sacrifices in world history. None was more dramatic; none more influential than Jesus' death. For someone as good as he was, as full of compassion, as strong, as insightful, to have it all taken away at the age of 33 is a powerful and moving example. He reminds us sacrifice is often required in the cause of truth, and even death cannot stop truth and love.

Isn't that who Jesus is?

When Jesus wanted to know who people thought he was, he didn't have any kids to ask, so he asked his disciples. Their answers are at the head of this article, and they are the ones I have described.

John the Baptist

At the time of Jesus' question, John had been dead for several months. He was beheaded because his strong moral

and blood, born in Roman Palestine in the days of Caesar Augustus, the historical person around whom our own faith tradition grew up.

As a timeless guide, Jesus is the man of *always*, almost mythic, present to us as an ideal person, his teachings available to direct and inspire us. But he himself is above history, loosened from his own time to be present to us only in imagination.

As a heroic martyr, Jesus is, again, the man of *then* — the “then” of the future, showing us what might be asked of us should the conflict between good and evil ever engage us so directly and fatally, and assuring us that love is stronger than death.

That’s what people are saying.

Is this a person who can make a difference to the world? Is this the person the world is waiting for?

Hardly. Those of us who must struggle with moral decisions in the world of unbelief, who must pay bills in a shrunken economy, who have children to raise, who must find ways to make human relationships work ... we need more than a historic leader, more than an imaginary companion, more than a stern example.

And, in truth, none of these is the Jesus of the Gospel. They are the Jesus of popular opinion, then and now. A safe Jesus. A Jesus described in half-truths. A helpless Jesus.

Fully to grasp the Gospel’s answer to the question Who is Jesus? we need the larger gospel story (Mark 8:1-30). Here, Jesus’ disciples show they are still in progress toward the answer. Even though they witnessed the feeding of 5,000 people (Mark 6:31-45), they don’t get it when Jesus does it again (8:1-9). When Jesus asks them, “Do you not yet understand?” they are mute (see 8:21).

And then comes the curious story in which Jesus heals a blind man, but only after a second try (8:22-26). After one application of healing, the man says he can see, but only so dimly that his friends look “like trees, walking.” Jesus treats him again, and “he saw everything clearly.”

This strange healing is, as Alan Richardson has said, an acted parable of



ANNO DOMINI

Jesus Through The Centuries

Alas, We Never Knew You

David J. Goa

A few years ago, following a class in which I had discussed the genius of Abraham, I reflected with a colleague on what I called a sea-change in the students’ basic knowledge. Of some 100 students in the class, only a handful had ever heard of Abraham; and, of that handful, only five identified him with the history and culture of the Jewish people. I suggested to my colleague, a specialist in the study of the Bible and the Jewish faith, that the cultural capital our generation had acquired with our mother’s milk had not been passed along to our children’s generation. He told me that, in his classes in religious studies, he rarely found more than a handful of students who had even a modicum of knowledge about Jesus of Nazareth. We mused on how it had come about that Jerusalem, a taproot of Western civilization, with its gift of both Jewish and Christian culture, had lost so much ground in the common memory of students.

This was the moment when the idea of an exhibition for the Year 2000 celebrations was born — an exhibition exploring the heart of two millennia through **Anno Domini: Jesus Through the Centuries**. How the question “Who do you say that I am?” has been answered over 20

centuries and how each answer has shaped and reshaped Western civilization and world culture is the heart of this exhibition.

Throughout this series of articles, I will reflect on one of the images of Jesus, drawing on the work of **Anno Domini: Jesus Through the Centuries**, to echo each of the essays in the “Who Is Jesus? A Reformed View” series. **R**

David J. Goa is curator of folklife, Provincial Museum of Alberta, and teaches at Saint Stephen’s College, University of Alberta. He is the curator of *Anno Domini*, a major international exhibition opening October 7, 2000.



Light of the World (1881).
Engraving. © The Provincial Museum of Alberta. PMA:J99.1523. This replication of a William Holman Hunt painting presents the locked door overgrown with weeds as a metaphor for the stubborn human heart, closed to Christ’s message of salvation.

For Study and Action

1. Read Mark 8:1-30 aloud. If you are meeting in a group, assign various parts to the members to read (i.e., narrator, Jesus, disciples, Pharisees, the blind man, Peter).
2. Examine each of the reactions to Jesus that the author outlines: a great religious leader (one of the prophets), a timeless guide (Elijah), a heroic martyr (John the Baptist). What truth is there in each of these views?
3. The author says that, even though the disciples witnessed the feeding of the 5,000 (Mark 6:31-44), plus a repeat performance in Mark 8:1-9, they still did not get it. What did they fail to understand?
4. Jesus follows this up with an "acted parable" (Mark 8:22-26). Note the progression of the healing from total blindness, to seeing dimly, to clear sight. Then Jesus poses the question that forms the basis of this millennium series: "Who do people say that I am?" The section ends with Peter's inspired answer, "You are the Messiah?" Have you gone through a similar progression in how you view Jesus? Where are you today? What difference does it make to you whether or not Jesus is the Messiah?

For Further Reading and Study

Jesus and the Victory of God by N. T. Wright (Fortress)

The Real Jesus by Luke Timothy Johnson (Harper)

The Jesus Quest by Ben Witherington III (InterVarsity)

the disciples' dawning insight. They haven't been with Jesus all these months for nothing, but their understanding of him is so dim they are still legally blind and need a theological white cane to get around.

Then it is that Jesus asks directly, "Who do people say that I am?" (verse 27). That's where this article started and, now, it's time to end.

Who is Jesus?

First, we see people as trees, walking. We hear the half-answers: John the Baptist, Elijah, some prophet. And then come the words Jesus has been waiting months to hear. Peter declares: "You are the Messiah" (verse 29).

Who is Jesus? He is Jesus Christ. That second word is not his last name; Christ and Messiah are the same word in different languages. In both Greek and Hebrew, they denote the person whom God has *anointed*. In the first sentence of Mark's Gospel, Jesus is called *God's Son*; now, Peter calls him *the Messiah*. We are not called Jesus-ites, you know, but Christians. Systematic theology has no Jesus-ology; it has a Christology.

Jesus is the Christ, the one whom God designated and sent — in whom all divine power is concentrated, in whom all that God enters our world of suffering and need. God is actually present to us in Jesus in full divine power.

And, now, as Advent approaches again, we know this is what we are waiting for. This is what Christmas is all about. God reaches us in the Baby's birth.

Of course, the Jesus of history is necessary. The Jesus of imagination inspires. The Jesus of example draws us on. But what we need is the Christ who saves.

My brother Rich is a college teacher and counsellor south of the border. A student in one of his classes, a girl of 19, was in distress over breaking up with her boyfriend. On the rebound, she had taken up with someone twice her age, and her parents were finding this difficult to deal with. Her father is a truck driver, a huge man with the nickname "Bear" — an intelligent fellow, but "simple and straightforward." He set out for his daughter's friend's place with a loaded gun in his pocket and murder in his heart. (He's not a Presbyterian.) As the dad said later, "I

was a tad riled." He managed to keep his hand off the gun and, the next day, the parents were in my brother's office.

They began to talk about what was involved, especially anger. The father spoke of his own childhood and of abuse he had suffered — things he had never put into words before. They talked about forgiveness, about even forgiving their daughter and her friend. They prayed, then the parents went away.

It was days before Rich heard from them again; the truck driver had been on the road. Finally, he came in. "The day after we talked," he said, "it felt as if a hundred-thousand pounds had been lifted from my shoulders." He was emphatic, "*A hundred-thousand pounds.*"

Rich said, "Well, you can look at me and know I'm no weight-lifter. Who do you think has been taking that weight off of you?"

There was a long silence and, finally, the man called Bear said, "Jesus Christ."

Most of us are carrying some weight around on our shoulders, some of us almost as much as that dad. It's the weight of worry, of responsibility, of anger, of guilt.

Do you remember what Advent is about?

And ye beneath life's crushing load,
Whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way
With painful steps and slow,
Look now! the glad and saving word
Comes swiftly on the wing.
Oh rest beside the weary road
And hear the angels sing.

It may take time for the half-answers to fade away, time for insight to come, time for conviction to mature. But Jesus, the Christ of God, has been long at our side. He wants to open our eyes. He wants to lift our loads. This Christmas — and why wait until then? — may he hear from each of us those words: "You are the Messiah." ■

Stanley Walters is the minister of Rosedale Church, Toronto.

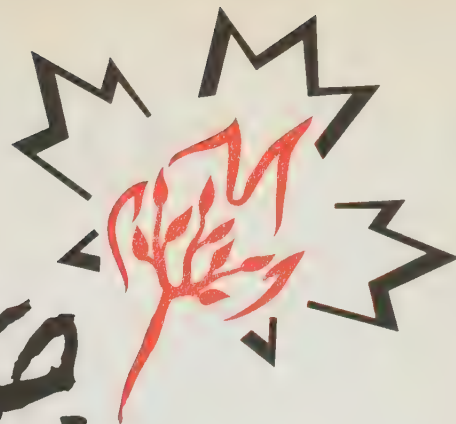
Next month:

"Truly God/truly human.
Can we believe Jesus is both?"

The Presbyterian Church in Canada

Millennium / 125th / Jubilee

Celebrate.



Covenant Renewal Service

Consider holding a Covenant Renewal Service as part of your congregation's Jubilee celebrations. This service dates from the time when new members were baptized during Easter. At that time, the other members would *renew* their baptismal vows. John and Charles Wesley used this service in the 18th century to begin the new year, helping church people to *renew* their covenant or agreement with God.

There is a sample service included in *The Book of Common Worship* (The Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1991). After the sermon, water is poured into the baptismal font as the leader calls the people to "remember our baptism and be thankful." Everyone then joins in a confession of faith using the Apostles' Creed, either in question and answer format or by saying the creed together. After a few words about baptism from *Living Faith*, the congregation is asked to renew with God the covenant made at baptism as expressed in the following question:

Do you intend to be faithful to the covenant God made with you at baptism — to live among God's people, to grow in knowledge and understanding of God's Word, to share in the Lord's Supper, to engage in prayer, to give witness to the good news in Christ by word and deed, to share responsibility and exercise your rights as members of this congregation, and to seek after justice and peace in all the earth?

A short prayer is said together. The people are then encouraged to exchange The Peace. The Peace may be exchanged with those nearby by a handshake or a hug, as appropriate. The traditional words, "The peace of Christ be with you," or "The peace of Christ" or simply "Peace" may be said. This is not a social interlude but a sign of God's gift of acceptance and unity. Following this, the worship service continues.

A Covenant Renewal Service could take place on any of these occasions: during the season of Easter (April 23 - June 4, 2000), Pentecost (June 11, 2000) or on the first Sunday of each new year or when the lectionary readings include the baptism of our Lord (January 9, 2000).

Hymns suitable for a Covenant Renewal Service include #754 "From the Slave Pens of the Delta" and #654 "O God of Bethel, by Whose Hand." "I Am the Church! You Are the Church!" #475 is a fun song for children of all ages. You can include these motions for the chorus:

I am the church! (*point to self*)

You are the church! (*point to another*)

We are the church together! (*spread arms out*)

All who follow Jesus, all around the world! (*with arms above head, make a circle*)

Yes, we're the church together! (*spread arms out*)

Two hymns that make a grand conclusion to a Covenant Renewal Service are # 478 "To Abraham and Sarah" and #472 "We Are God's People." (*Thanks to Judee Archer Green for submitting this idea.*)

Other People's Wars

Lyle Sams, who served as a chaplain in the Canadian Armed Forces, writes to offer an idea for millennium observances.

"My suggestion," he writes, "arises from a luncheon with the retired chaplains to the Forces, the prayers used by the chaplain general in the Remembrance ceremony at the temporary National Memorial in Ottawa, my personal remembrance of Mary Lindsay (a late member of my former congregation in Quebec City who served as a nurse in three wars — the Boer War, the Great War and the Second World War), and my year as a member of the United Nations Emergency Force in 1961 when we had Canadian casualties to care for."

The chaplain general's prayers remembered those who have suffered and died during this century in "other people's wars." This phrase, Sams points out, allows us to remember not only Canadians who died in wars such as Korea and Vietnam but also in almost 50 years of United Nations peacekeeping operations.

He also urges support for two initiatives of the Royal Canadian Legion. On November 11, 1999, at 11 a.m., the Legion hopes to persuade Canadians to observe two minutes of silence for Canadians killed in wars during the century. The hope is that a "wave of silence" will move across Canada beginning at 11 a.m. Newfoundland time.

In 2000, the Legion also hopes to return the remains of an unknown soldier killed at Vimy Ridge in the First World War in time for Canada's millennium celebrations. After ceremonies in each provincial and territorial capital, and lying in state on Parliament Hill, the remains would be buried in front of the National War Memorial. It is estimated there are 100,000 unidentified Canadian soldiers buried overseas. **R**

#3 in the series on natural church development

Unwrapping Your Spiritual Gifts

by G. John Baergen

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed" (I Corinthians 12:1). The Apostle Paul is clear on the importance of knowing our spiritual gifts. He understood that the Holy Spirit gives an awesome array of spiritual gifts "for the common good" (12:7).

Imagine a church where people know what their gifts are and actively serve by using them. Imagine people passionately excited about serving in various ministries. What would it take today to achieve that ideal so clearly portrayed in the New Testament church?

It requires leadership that does everything possible to help people identify and understand their spiritual gifts and, then, is committed to helping people discover the appropriate setting to use them. Underlying this focus is the assumption that all ministry is sacred. The use of spiritual gifts is understood to be vital to the health of the Body of Christ as it functions in the local church.

Christian Schwarz says: "The gift-oriented approach reflects the conviction that God sovereignly determines which Christian should best assume which ministries. The role of church leadership is to help its members identify their gifts and to integrate them into appropriate ministries. When Christians serve in their area of giftedness, they generally function less in their own strength and more in the power of the Holy Spirit. Thus, ordinary people can accomplish the extraordinary!"

The result is a community of Christ's followers who are energized by using their gifts. Unlike the energy drain of serving simply wherever there is a need, these people are continually refuelled by their service. The truth is, the contentedness of Christians is highly influenced by the use of their gifts in a ministry. Serving in areas that make the most of our gifts means we will have fun; our ministries will be fruitful and we will be fulfilled. That is a formula designed to produce satisfaction and contentment.

A shift in thinking is required. No longer do folk serve simply according to perceived needs within a "pre-conceived framework." The status quo is no longer acceptable or workable. Ministries are not "grandfathered" in. That is, ministries are no longer maintained merely because we've always had them. Now, they must be championed by individuals who are passionately interested and who have appropriate gifts. Gifts determine the ministry and overall direction for the church.

Schwarz says the profile of the gifts in a church is, in fact, God's blueprint for the development of the church. As leadership commits itself to discovering that profile of gifts and places a high priority on integrating people into areas most ap-

propriate to their gifts, growth occurs. Everyone is recognized as having a unique place of service, a place chosen and directed by the Holy Spirit. Not only are all gifts recognized as unique, they are understood as vital to the whole body. This bears testimony to the underlying principle that growth is "biotic."

That is, as the conditions for growth are in place, and Christians are serving in areas that use their spiritual gifts, growth takes place "all by itself."

What a relief! Recruiting volunteers is past. Ministry becomes a delight as people discover their gifts and

are given opportunities and support to develop and use those gifts in appropriate areas. Burn-out becomes a thing of the past as leadership and laity understand the criteria upon which to make decisions.

This second quality characteristic defines church development. Church development means: "every Christian serving in the place where God has called him or her to be" (Schwarz, *Implementation Guide to Natural Church Development*). Understanding the principles of gift-oriented ministry will impact all other aspects of church health and further prepare the ground for the Holy Spirit to do the work of growing the church.

Being committed to unwrapping our

"No factor influences the contentedness of Christians more than whether they are utilizing their gifts or not"

— Christian Schwarz

spiritual gifts is more than a spiritual exercise. Knowing our gifts will unveil God's wondrous vision for each church. By following God's plan, our churches will experience the joy of service in the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit. No wonder the Apostle Paul emphasized spiritual gifts! He understood how essential it is to know God's plan and to rely on his power to fulfil it. We can be as-

sured that "... God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be" (I Corinthians 12:18 *NIV*). **R**

John Baergen is executive director and chief executive officer of the International Centre for Leadership Development and Evangelism in Winfield, B.C.; 1-800-804-0777. Quotations from *Natural Church Growth* by Christian Schwarz.

For Discussion and Reflection

by Jim Czegledi

The Bible teaches that spiritual gifts are special, God-given abilities. These gifts of grace enable Christians to know God and serve God through the church.

The first step is to discern our spiritual gifts. This process of self-discovery involves prayer and Bible study. Inventories or discovery tools are also available to help us discern our gifts (see below). While individual discernment has its role, discovering our spiritual gifts happens best in the context of relationships and community. Discovering these gifts can be a useful exercise for sessions, boards and committees. Knowing them helps us discern our focus and role in the congregation. Encouraging people to use their gifts is the key to effective ministry.

Christian Schwarz is correct when he affirms that God's sovereignty determines our gifts. But their recognition and use is exercised by the local church. John Calvin, the theological forebear of the Presbyterian Church, believed the call to ministry, while understood initially by the individual, was ultimately confirmed by the people of God or local congregation. This thinking can also be applied to discerning and using spiritual gifts.

While individuals strive to discover their gifts, it is the responsibility of the church to recognize and employ them appropriately for ministry. This is what the Apostle Paul refers to as the "com-

mon good." Gifts find their spiritual expression when used for the sake of the community in concert with the mission of the church.

It is the work of the church under the guidance of the Spirit to orchestrate people and their gifts in maximizing their potential for the Kingdom of God. The church grows as people mature in their faith and use these nurtured passions for ministry. Leaders are mentors or coaches who help others discover and develop their intuitive skills in the ministry and mission of the church.

After reading Isaiah 11:2-3, I Corinthians 12:4-11 and Romans 12:4-8, ask these questions:

- What do you think your spiritual gifts are?
- Do others in your church agree?
- Take a spiritual gifts inventory (free of charge) on the Internet at: www.cforc.com/sgifts.cgi or <http://ns.htc.net/~shanks/stpaul/gifts3.htm>. Or purchase a discovery tool-kit from a Christian bookstore. Do these resources help you to discern, confirm or identify your spiritual gifts?
- Ask yourself and your local congregation how these gifts may be used to the glory of God and for the advancement of Christ's Kingdom. **R**

Jim Czegledi is associate secretary for evangelism, church growth and worship of the Life and Mission Agency of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

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The Almond Tree: Sign of a Watching God



by Heather Johnston

IMAGE: A six-year-old girl puts up her hand in class: "Teacher, I don't think my father likes Hitler." The teacher warns that father to choose his words more carefully in the presence of his daughter.

IMAGE: "Father, why does that boy wear a yellow star on his coat?"

IMAGE: Why did Herr Blumbaum, a well-respected butcher, come in the dead of night to say goodbye to Mother and Father?

IMAGE: The windows of a classroom reflect the licking flames of a burning building: a synagogue.

IMAGE: Every evening at exactly six o'clock, a father listens to Beromuenster, a Swiss radio station. One of the children must walk around the house watching for men with special detectors. It is forbidden, on pain of death, to listen to foreign stations.

*Reflections of a pastor's
daughter growing up
in Nazi Germany*

IMAGE: The children are fast asleep. Their father is in Berlin attending one of the many secret meetings with Pastor Martin Niemöller. At 2 a.m., the Gestapo bang on the door: "Open up." The children know their drill: the oldest takes a suitcase with incriminating documents out the back door to a neighbour and the others hide files under their mattresses. The youngest continue sleeping.

IMAGE: Hundreds of teenagers are gathered in a schoolyard. Suddenly, Allied jets zoom down and shoot into the crowd. Pilots and gunners are clearly visible.

The challenge to reflect on the Confessing Church and its role in Nazi Germany evoked deeply hidden memories. It helped me come to terms with a period that had a profound impact on my early years. As British historian Ian Kershaw states, "It is only through the lens of history that we can learn the future." But I am also "a part of all that I have met," as Tennyson put it in his poem "Ulysses."

I look at a book I have not touched in decades. It burns my hands and my heart. It was written in the late '30s by my grandfather, a well-known and respected physician. My beloved grandfather, who took me to the Schloss Café in Kassel and bought my first ice cream. My grandfather, with whom I fed the swans in the shadow of the Hercules. My grandfather, who faithfully attended church every Sunday. I read: "Wherever there is disintegration and rot, there is the influence of Jewry." How proud he was of his activities as a student, distributing leaflets proclaiming apparent Jewish attempts to take over Germany.

Was my father influenced by such an attitude? My father, secretary to Martin Niemöller of the Confessing Church. My father, founder of the *Pfarrer Notbund*, the Pastors Emergency Alliance in Hessen. My father, torn between service to church and country. My father, dying an ignoble death in a Yugoslav prisoner of war camp. One of the greatest regrets of my life is that I am not able to ask my father this question, and many others.

My husband and I drove to Auschwitz-Birkenau. I needed to see that hellish, desolate place with its streets of grey stones and ashen-looking buildings. I needed to feel the horror, disgust and shame in my very soul. We went to "the theatre," the building that housed the Zyklon B gas used in the extermination of millions. It stood in the shadow of a huge cross and was occupied by 14 Carmelite nuns. I wanted to try to understand their perspective. I wanted to speak woman to woman, Christian to Christian. Sadly, my conversation with Mother Superior was not a sharing of thoughts — the iron grill separating us could have been penetrated more easily than her perceptions, even her prayers. Of course, Christians must pray in deep contrition — *but not here!* How could the sisters claim to honour dead

Jews while dishonouring those living today? I am a part of all that I have met.

After those personal experiences, these facts of history:

The mid 1920s: Article 24 of the program of the NSDAP (Hitler's party) states: "We insist upon freedom for all religious confessions, providing — they do not endanger or offend the German race's sense of decency and morality ... The Party fights against the Jewish-materialistic spirit at home and abroad...."

1930: Karl Barth, professor of systematic theology in Bonn, challenges the ethos of "National Protestantism." He calls for "a return to the prophetic witness of biblical revelation." Barth becomes the rallying figure of the intellectual resistance to Hitler.

1932: The so-called faith movement of German Christians comes into being. That same year, the German Conference of Catholic Bishops commits itself to a policy of official opposition to the National Socialist Party.

The fateful year of 1933 dawns. Events catapult:

January: A group of pastors in Hamburg sign four strong articles against state policies.

March: Hitler broadcasts his policy statement.

April 1 (April Fool's Day): The Roman Catholic bishops dramatically reverse their previous opposition. Yet, on the same day, Monsignor Lichtenberg, dean of Berlin Cathedral, pleads with the cardinal to persuade the Reich government to lift the boycott against all Jewish businesses. The cardinal declines. Later, Lichtenberg prays daily for Jewish people by name. He finally dies on the way to a concentration camp.

Still in April, a totally unknown figure, Ludwig Mueller, is appointed *Reichsbischof*. The Protestant churches' nominee (beloved Pastor Friedrich Bodelschwingh) has to withdraw.

July: Small groups, forerunners of the Confessing Church, bitterly oppose the theology and methods of German Christians.

The same month, the pope signs an accord, a concordat with Hitler. According to Article 16, before taking office, bishops are to take an oath of fealty:

"Before God and on the holy Gospels I swear and promise — as becomes a bishop — loyalty to the German Reich and to the state of ..."

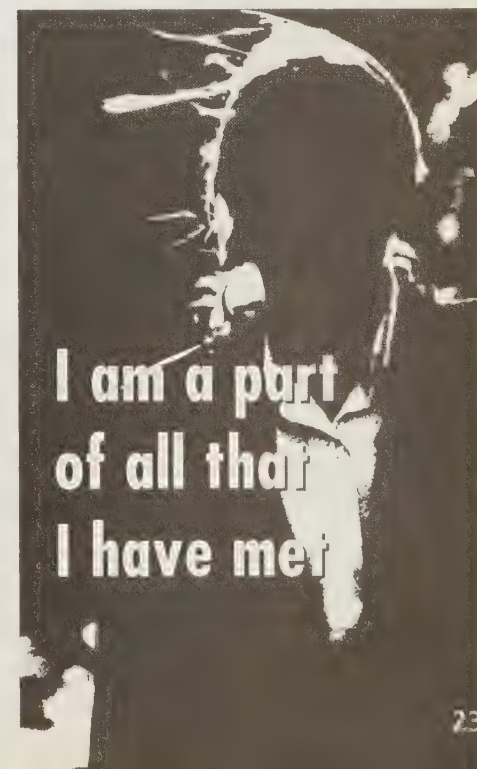
Summer of 1933: Hitler declares an "Aryan clause," preventing non-Aryans from serving in the church. Church opposition to that decree is strong.

September: Dietrich Bonhoeffer rejects a pastorate in Berlin. "How can I accept at a time when my 'non-Aryan' colleagues are barred from such a position?" He becomes pastor of a church in London, England. He returns to Germany in 1939 following a strongly perceived call by God. In 1945, he is executed for his participation in the attempt on Hitler's life.

Also in September, Martin Niemöller, the leader and symbol of church resistance to Hitler, invites clergy to join the Emergency Alliance — a group of pastors declaring they "will be bound in our preaching by Holy Scripture and the Reformation confessions alone." Niemöller persists in speaking of the Jewish rabbi of Nazareth as the head of the church.

November: The Berlin "sports palace scandal" — 20,000 people listen to wild utterances of a German Christian leader. Moderate German Christians resign in droves and the ranks of Niemöller's Emergency Alliance swell.

Five days before Christmas: Seven hundred thousand members of various Protestant youth movements are ordered to fuse with the Hitler Youth and wear that uniform.



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Many leaders in church and university, including Niemöller, are suspended from office, fined, imprisoned or transferred as 1934 dawns. From May 29-31, 1934, the Reformed Church in Barmen is the locale for the now famous Barmen Declaration. Hitherto bitter rivals, Lutheran, Reformed, United and Free churches gather for a first Confessing Synod. Their intention: to denounce the false teaching of German Christians, seen as a demonic cultural religion.

The juggernaut of the Nazi machine rolls on. The state is in the hands of murderers and their accomplices, surrounded by a wall of spectators. It is always the silent majority that enables a dictatorship to commit its gruesome deeds.

Some spectators become fighters in the resistance. Too often, their names are forgotten — whether they be Barth or Bonhoeffer, Heppe or Heiler, Niemöller or Stauffenberg, a Hans or Sophie Scholl, or movements like the Confessing Church or the White Rose.

In 1945, three months before my father dies, destitute, sick and hungry, far away from home, he writes in his diary: "As a church we did not do our duty, not in the *Judenfrage* [question of the Jews], not in the question of euthanasia, not in the question of justice. Everything ended in idolizing *das Volk* [the people, the tribe]. Behind the mask lured a satanically planned party line of terrorizing people. Please, God, may I be allowed to participate in the rebuilding of the church, with a tried and cleansed soul!" That is not to be.

In retrospect, it is easy to say that even the resistance of the Confessing Church had blinkers on. It is easy, from the safe vantage point of passing decades and in an atmosphere of freedom, to wage criticism against the *Bekennende Kirche* — to see the Barmen Declaration of 1934 as being almost exclusively concerned about the church's own safety and its purity of proclamation. Was it "*Barmen ohne Erbarmen*" — Barmen without compassion?

I confess I am tempted to ask, Why, oh why, did you courageous church leaders of your day not speak out against the unspeakable evils committed all around you? After the war, Martin Niemöller

wrote: "I ask myself over and over again, what would have happened if 14 thousand Protestant ministers all over Germany had defended the truth with their very lives in the years 1933 or '34? I can imagine that we should have saved millions of lives — this is the price we now have to pay." And, must Canadians not ask how many lives we could have saved if, 60 years ago, Christian leaders of Canada had not refused landing rights to the *St. Louis*?

There are no answers to "what if" questions. Let us not forget the church in Germany existed in an atmosphere of perversion of Party and State. "Only those who have looked into the eyes of their torturers and yet have stood their ground have the right to judge," said Ernst Reuter in 1946, late mayor of Berlin, himself imprisoned by the Nazis. Can I even imagine the terror my father lived under daily, hourly — fearing for his own and his family's lives? Year after year, he faithfully wrote letters, sharing information with colleagues within that Confessing Church about the *Kirchenkampf* (the church struggle), continuing long after complete censorship and a "muzzling decree" were imposed.

Conscious of the great burden of history, not only in the land of my birth but also in my adopted land of Canada, I ask: "And what of today? Could it be that our gaze is also too firmly fixed on the threat to our institutions, our churches, our synagogues, the 'purity' of our message?" Do we really live that shalom, that wholeness, to which our faith challenges us?

As we are drawn into the hype of celebrating the accomplishments of this era, I agree with Chris Brazier (*New Internationalist*): "Any and all meditations on the meaning of this past millennium must inevitably return to the Holocaust. God grant that, by the end of the next century, the historical memory of this bleakest of episodes will remain starkly alive, its lessons understood, learned" and, I add, not trivialized!

Today, in St. Petersburg, Florida, one of the 40 "fun things to do" is to visit the Holocaust Museum and buy a replica of a Polish boxcar for \$39.95! For a donation of \$5,000, you will receive a genuine railway spike from Treblinka. How dare we drain the nightmare of its horror! How dare we treat the most shattering

event of modern history as a banality!

Is it not high time, more than half a century after the gates of the concentration camps were opened, to open the gates of hope? The Hebrew Bible recounts stories where almonds and their blooms play a significant role. Almonds were among the presents Jacob sent to Pharaoh. The six arms of the candelabra in the Holy of Holies were shaped like almond blossoms. Aaron's staff sprouted, blossomed and produced ripe almonds overnight — God's affirmation of his leadership. I venture to guess many in the underground church of Nazi Germany would identify with almond blossoms. They, too, took up the staff of leadership. And they, like Jeremiah, heard God's promise (1:11-12): "*The word of the LORD came to me, saying, 'Jeremiah, what do you see?' And I said, 'I see a branch of an almond tree.' Then the LORD said to me, 'You have seen well, for I am watching over my word to perform it.'*"

This story is a play on words, almost

impossible to translate. In Hebrew, almond is *shaqed*. From the same root comes the word "vigilant" (*shoqed*) — watching. God promises to be ever watchful. Is that promise the reason my father planted the almond tree so many decades ago? Is it that promise that draws me each spring to the little almond bush in our garden in Hamilton?

After several imprisonments by the Gestapo, Israeli writer Schalom Ben-Chorin immigrated to Palestine and became one of the early pioneers in promoting better relations between Jews and Christians, Israelis and Germans. He is a sign of hope. In his book *Ich lebe in Jerusalem (I Live in Jerusalem)*, he recalled one cold February day in 1942. While standing on his balcony, his eyes were drawn to the first tender, white/pink blossoms of an almond tree in his neighbour's garden. A poem welled up inside him. It later became a theme song for many *Kirchentags* (Christian festivals) in Germany:

Friends, the almond tree
is blooming again —
Is that not a sign
that love endures?

Life does not cease
though blood screams —
Do not deem this of naught
during this darkest hour!

Thousands are crushed by war —
a whole world is gone.
Yet, life's blossoming victory
gently sways in the wind.

Friends, the almond tree
cradles its blooms again —
That assures me
that life is victorious!

(free translation) **R**

The material in this article was originally presented at a Holocaust Memorial Service in Metropolitan United Church, Toronto, on April 18, 1999. Heather Johnston is a member of MacNab Church, Hamilton, Ont.

What I Am in Prayer

I'm a thing tugging
at the darkness
in hopes of revealing
slivers of light,

an overripe doubter
trying to chart
the uncertain journey
between wishful thinking

and a true dialogue
with the Great Thing.
I'm a complicated
amoeba brazen enough

to believe the Great
I Am has time to set
aside the celestial
machinery and chat.

I want my prayers
to be homing pigeons
winging their way
through the painted sky,

salmon who know
without a doubt
the stream they swim
leads back to the nest.

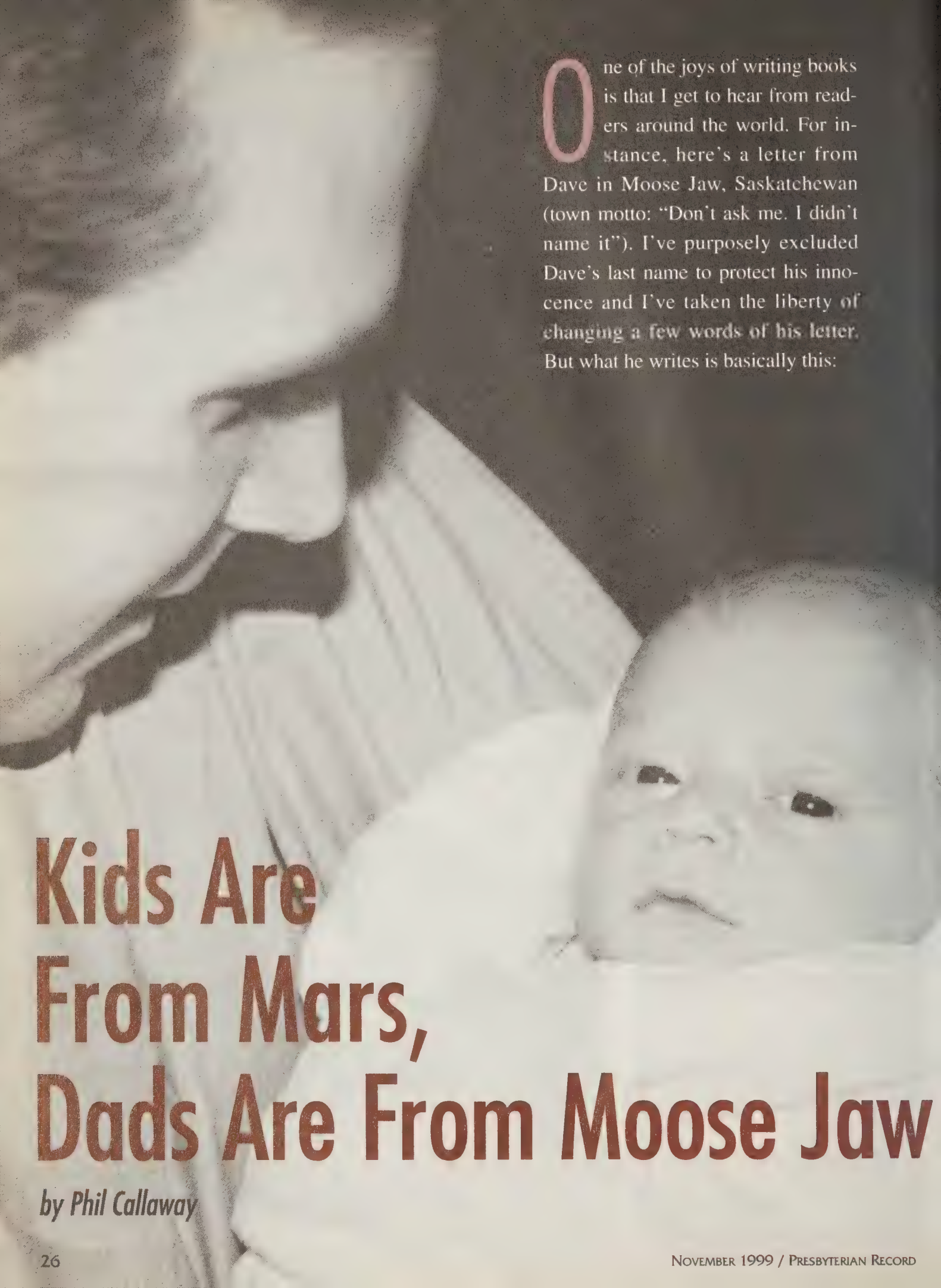
— Fredrick Zydek



Guideposts Celebrating Our Heritage



Major J. M. (Jock) Anderson (centre), Presbyterian chaplain in the Canadian Forces, distributing clothing to Korean children in one of the new villages established for war refugees. Photo circa 1954.

A black and white photograph of a man with a beard and a baby. The man is on the left, looking down at the baby. The baby is on the right, looking up at the man. The man is wearing a light-colored shirt. The baby is wearing a light-colored onesie.

One of the joys of writing books is that I get to hear from readers around the world. For instance, here's a letter from Dave in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan (town motto: "Don't ask me. I didn't name it"). I've purposely excluded Dave's last name to protect his innocence and I've taken the liberty of changing a few words of his letter. But what he writes is basically this:

Kids Are From Mars, Dads Are From Moose Jaw

by Phil Callaway

Dear Phil,

Over the years, I've enjoyed reading your stories about your children. But I really hope you're exaggerating. You see, my wife is due in a month and I'm a little frightened. No, I'm a LOT frightened. In fact, sometimes I'd give anything to back out. I'm 21 and it's like my life is over. Friends of ours had their first child a year ago and they've hardly slept since. They rarely get out anymore and, when they do, they have these monstrous bags under their eyes. They think he's the cutest little guy on earth, but I think he looks like E.T. He requires more maintenance than their pickup truck and he's already made a serious dent in their savings account. The husband changes diapers with a clothespin on his nose, and I'm sure I'll be worse. I won't have a clue what to do when the baby arrives. I haven't picked up a kid in my life and I'm scared to death I'll drop this one. What I'd like to know is this: Did you feel pretty adequate for the task when you became a father? And what can I do to prepare for fatherhood? Please answer ... and please hurry.

Sleepless in Saskatchewan

Dear Dave,

Congratulations! You are about to be welcomed into the Guys Who Can't Believe We're Dads Club. When I was your age, fatherhood was the furthest thing from my mind. I was a newlywed who had good reason to be suspicious of children. My older brother had a few. In fact, one Thanksgiving dinner, I watched them put peas in their ears and corn in their diapers. It was pretty disgusting. They blew Pablum out their noses and then they wanted a kiss. And — you guessed it — their mother gave them one.

That afternoon, as I lay peacefully on the sofa sleeping off a turkey hangover, my one-year-old nephew brought a ripe diaper to rest on my forehead.

When it comes to faith, your child is the one person with whom you can't afford to be a hypocrite

I made a vow that day:

I will have children as soon as cows produce Coca-Cola.

I will change diapers when $4+3=11$.

But four years later, my wonderful wife said, "Honey, let's have kids ... tons of them." And it sounded like a good idea at the time.

Eight months later, I found myself trying to come up with answers to questions like, "I look just like the Goodyear Blimp, don't I?"

I also found myself in prenatal class learning how to breathe, watching R-rated films and holding a tennis ball. "Rub her back with this in the delivery room," said the instructor. "It will provide peace and serenity, a sense of oneness with each other and the universe." I thought to myself, *I bet Noah never went to prenatal class.*

May 31, 1986, was a Saturday. My friends played softball that day. I paced a hospital hallway with my wife. Or, at least, I think it was my wife. But, whereas Ramona had always been rather sweet and soft-spoken, this woman was more like Attila the Hun in a hospital gown.

"Rub my back," she commanded.

I pulled out the tennis ball.

"DON'T TOUCH ME!" she hollered.

This continued for what seemed like 14 days. Until I found myself face-to-face with the first miracle I'd ever witnessed: my first-born son. Sure he was a little wrinkly, but who could blame him? I held him close, Dave.

I touched his tiny fingers and counted his toes — all 10 of them. I looked into his eyes. They were blue. Like mine.

Congratulations!

You are about to be welcomed into the Guys Who Can't Believe We're Dads Club

"Stephen," said my wife with the widest smile I'd ever seen. And then the most amazing thing happened. A revival, I suppose. As I looked into those blue eyes, it was as if I heard these words:

"Callaway, for the first 25 years of your life, you've been a hypocrite. You've been close to the church but far from God. You are holding in your arms the one person you'll never be able to hide it from. If you think this little guy won't see it, you're naïve. If you think this little guy won't learn from what he sees, think again."

People ask me when I became a Christian. I say May 31, 1986. You see, that night, for the first time in my life, I bowed my head and said: "Dear God, I'm sorry. Make me real. I want my precious little boy to hunger and thirst after righteousness. I want him to love Jesus with everything he's got. If he won't learn to from me, he has two strikes against him already."

And I meant every word.

It's been slow going sometimes, but I believe God heard that prayer. Five years later, this same little boy looked up at me one night and said, "Daddy, I wanna be like you." Tears came to my eyes.

I don't have all the child-rearing answers for you, Dave. But I do know this: If you want your child to love God, you love God first. If you want your son to obey, be obedient to that still small voice. If you want your life to be changed forever, have children. Lots of them.

P.S. Don't forget the clothespins. **R**

Phil Callaway is the editor of Prairie Bible Institute's *Servant* magazine, a popular speaker, and a best-selling author. His new book *Who Put the Skunk in the Trunk?* (Multnomah) was released this fall.

Singing Praises to the Changing Seasons

Tom Dickey

Kees Vandermey had an idea. Oh, not for the first time, of course, but this idea was particularly noteworthy — it involved music. Specifically, it involved enjoying music from the new *Book of Praise* by composing a cantata. The cantata would introduce the seasons of the Church Year in narrative and musical form with the hope of fostering a greater understanding of the Christian story. And, to make it even

more accessible, the cantata would be inexpensive to produce.

Kees, who is minister of Knox Church, Elora, and St. Andrew's Church, Alma, Ontario, spent two days last winter sequestered with the choir director of Knox putting ideas into musical form. It probably helped that the choir director is Kees' wife, Darlene. The result was *Footprints of Praise*, an hour-long cantata that had its début at Knox in April and at St. Andrew's in May.

Evidently, writer's block was never a problem in composing *Footprints of Praise*. Kees points out he was greatly aided by the new hymn-book, in which hymns 109 to 300 are set according to the Church Year. In fact, he may have inadvertently committed himself to a *Footprints of Praise: The Sequel* by pointing out "There's enough material there to do the whole thing over again some day with entirely different music."

The cantata took the congregation through the liturgical calendar, with each season marked by a narrative describing its significance. The colours and themes of the Church Year were brought further into focus through the use of 12 pulpit falls made by Lillian Harrison, a member of Knox, Elora. At the conclusion of each narration, the appropriately coloured fall was placed on the pulpit. The choir would then sing one or two specially selected hymns. Lillian says she found the experience "very rewarding" — a good thing, since she spent two months on the project. "It really made me think about what we are celebrating," she says.

Another visual element was provided by actors portraying Jesus, both as a baby and as an adult, as well as Mary and Joseph, the Wise Men and the disciples. Costumes and props were borrowed from previous cantatas (staged once or twice a year by Knox, Elora). A simple set of

floodlights with a dimmer rented from a local company added to the dramatic impact of the scenes. For example, an especially poignant moment takes place when, as the lights are dimmed, the audience sees Jesus off to one side of the church, alone, picking up the cross for his walk to Calvary. "There was a real sense of the

moment," says Kees of the scene. "Everyone in the church could feel it."

The success of *Footprints of Praise* should not be measured in financial terms (the offering went to the renovation fund). In presenting it, Kees and Darlene Vandermey hoped it would help people to understand "a little more" about the Church Year and its colours.

"We can't assume people know the story anymore," says Kees. "When I say the word Epiphany, I automatically think of the coming of the Wise Men and the baptism of Jesus, but not everyone makes the same connection."

Not everyone, maybe, but, after *Footprints of Praise*, it seems certain a few more people are making that connection. **R**

Based on a report by Kelvin Lack.

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The Zeal of Lizzie Lyle

by Tom Dickey

Imagine organizing and participating in the women's groups of a busy downtown church, being active in the community and raising six children. Now, imagine doing it at the turn of the century — without the aid of cellphones, computers, VCRs and video games.

For Elizabeth (Lizzie) Lyle, it was all in a day's work. Indeed, from the day she landed in Hamilton, Ontario, in 1878 with her husband, Samuel, who had been called from Northern Ireland to the pulpit of Central Church, her zeal seems to have known no bounds.

In 1880, two years after she began her new life in Canada, Lizzie formed the Ladies Aid Society. Its goal was to promote "friendship among members, the alleviation of suffering and destitution among the poor of the congregation, and the contrivance of means to assist the managers in paying off the indebtedness caused by alterations and improvements to the church." Although there was little need for "alleviating destitution" in the relatively wealthy congregation of Central, friendship was certainly promoted. By the end of its first year, the society had 70 members. And, as for assisting the managers in the maintenance of the church, the group was able to raise \$460 to purchase venetian blinds and reduce the debt on the organ. Almost 120 years later, the Ladies Aid group still exists at Central under its current name of the Guild.

In 1881, Lizzie founded the Mission Band for young members of the congregation. Sixty girls and 22 boys attended the first meeting. The group raised money to send women missionaries to India by making broom bags and housemaids' aprons, and holding concerts and lectures.

In 1891, a Senior Mission Band was formed to accommodate the original members who had grown up and married. Lizzie served as its president from 1897 until her retirement in 1910. In 1918, the group was renamed the Elizabeth Lyle Auxiliary in her honour. After amalgamation with the Women's Missionary Society in 1947, the group became known as the Elizabeth Lyle Auxiliary to the WMS, and it remains so to this day.



Although Lizzie's contribution to the health of Central Church was undeniable, it was, perhaps, the health of the community that most benefited from her fervour. While serving as president of the Hamilton Local Council of Women in 1896, she initiated an anti-tuberculosis campaign based on the "revolutionary" concept of treating the disease with fresh air and complete rest. Undeterred by many set-backs, she quietly negotiated the donation of a 98-acre farm on which the Mountain Sanatorium was officially opened in 1906.

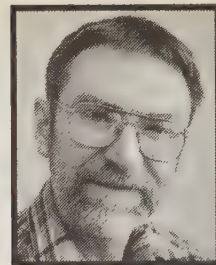
Her concern for fresh air and the protection of the environment was also evident in her membership on the Standing Committee on Conservation. Proving further that she was a woman ahead of her time, Lizzie and the other committee members promoted zoning regulations, the preservation of wildlife and the development of parks — issues we tend to associate with the close of the 20th century, not the beginning of it.

Lizzie's *esprit de corps* can be found in several other branches of the public health sector. She helped to form the Hamilton Branch of the Victorian Order of Nurses and was a member of the first auxiliary board. She was a member of the local committee and the provincial Association for the Custodial Care of the Feeble-Minded, the Health League, and the Ladies' Board of the Hamilton Health Association. On top of all that, she was a director of the Aged Women's Home and Orphan Asylum in Hamilton.

In the field of education, Lizzie was active in developing a domestic science training program in the public schools. She was also a member of the local Women's Canadian Club.

By the time she retired, there were few segments of church and community life untouched by Elizabeth Lyle. She was a leader and an apparently indefatigable organizer whose influence was widespread. But more than that, she was a deeply caring person who felt a strong responsibility for the less fortunate and put her feelings into action. **R**

Based on an article by Pat Ingraham.



The Wee-Wee-Wee Toe

I was going out to the hot tub one night. The house was dark, but I was confident I knew my way around. As I passed the dining area, though, a chair ambushed me. It leaped out right in front of my left foot. I broke a toe.

How can you laugh?

If we break an arm, a leg or any major bone, we get sympathy. When we break a toe, we get mostly smothered smirks. Especially when it's a little toe, the one that goes "wee wee wee all the way home."

It wasn't anything I wanted to laugh about, certainly. When I managed to lurch to a light switch, grimacing with pain, I could see my little toe stuck out from the side of my foot at about a 45-degree angle. I couldn't imagine sleeping through the night like that. So I grabbed the toe, stuffed it back where I thought it should be and wrapped my foot in an elastic bandage.

"You put it back by yourself?" the doctor asked the next morning. He seemed a bit surprised.

I didn't get much sleep that night. Everything hurts more in the middle of the night, of course. But I had lots of time to reflect on the significance of the little toe to the rest of the body. In practical terms, it's probably my most useless appendage. I don't use it for anything important like eating, or typing, or talking on the phone. If that little toe were amputated, I could probably walk without missing it much.

So why did my whole foot feel as if it were exploding with pain? Why did I have bolts of lightning shooting up my leg? Why, above all, did my head throb? My head is at the opposite end of my body from that injured toe.

Almost 20 centuries ago, the Apostle Paul coined the metaphor of the Church community as a human body. He called

it "the Body of Christ." He described perfectly my experience: "If one member suffers, all suffer together with it" (I Corinthians 12:26).

Most of us can recognize that truth in our own families. Only in a seriously dysfunctional family would one member of the family go out celebrating and carousing when another one lies in a hospital bed, sick and dying. When a mother is diagnosed with breast cancer, a father with Parkinson's disease, a son or daughter with juvenile diabetes, everyone in that family is affected.

But we have trouble applying that awareness in a larger context. We don't necessarily feel any pain when a volcano erupts in Indonesia or a civil war in Rwanda. It feels so far away. Our culture teaches us to think of ourselves as independent, self-sufficient. We are John Wayne — or Gary Cooper, standing alone on that dusty street in *High Noon*. We rarely see ourselves as threads in a larger cloth. There's something almost humiliating about being only one thread

in a tapestry — we want to be the whole tapestry, all by ourselves.

Even in the Christian Church, people tend to apply Paul's insight only to their own community. We look after each other. In my home church, a group of parishioners came every morning and afternoon for two years to sit with a woman stricken with Pick's disease — something like Alzheimer's — while her husband was away at work. But we don't see Islamic women in Afghanistan, or children in a barrio in Manila, as part of our body, our community.

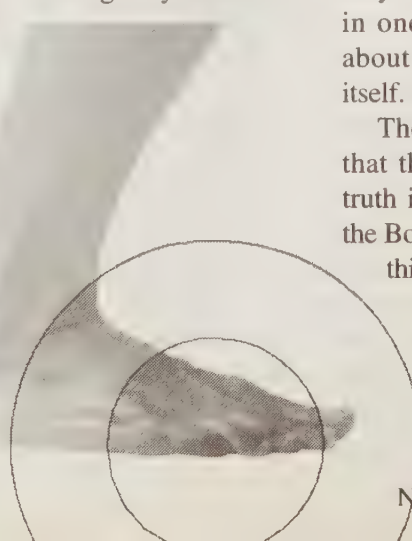
And we certainly don't think of ourselves being connected to Bengal

tigers, prairie gophers, a colony of seals in the Aleutians, or a rainforest in the Amazon.

There are hints of that recognition in the Bible, though we have to look hard to find them. By Jesus' time, the mighty cedars of Lebanon had all been cut down. Jesus' assurance that God loves us more than the sparrows makes sense only if God also loves the sparrows. And in one of Jesus' parables, God cares about the welfare of the vineyard for itself.

These hints support my conviction that there's a broader, more universal truth in Paul's inspired metaphor about the Body of Christ. When anyone or anything — anywhere — suffers, we all suffer. The way my whole body hurt when I broke my toe. **R**

Jim Taylor is a writer, editor and co-founder of Wood Lake Books.





Chasing the Wind

I've been enjoying my biannual dose of *Star Trek* recently. For most of the year, I don't have a television; so, when I come home, I overdose on episodes a friend tapes.

What struck me this year was the proportion of episodes dealing with religion. I know I've talked about this before, but

at all in 1996, while another 10 per cent attended only once or twice a year. A 1946 Gallup Poll reported that 67 per cent of Canadian adults had attended religious services during the previous week; by 1996, the number was 20 per cent. Weekly attendance at mainline Protestant services

it is often from a negative standpoint. But the interest — in religious, ethical, moral, faith issues — is there.

This is a tough fact for institutionalized religions to face. It is easier to say today's society doesn't care about religion or doesn't believe in God. Easier than admitting, yes, people are concerned about what we would term religious issues or, yes, they do believe in God; they simply haven't found the institutionalized church a good place to deal with God. Or faith.

All around us, a debate is going on about faith in the broadest sense of the term. But

mainline churches, for whatever reason, have opted out or have been excluded from that debate. And most refuse to consider why, blaming instead a "non-believing" society.

"With all my wisdom," the writer of Ecclesiastes says, "I tried to understand everything that happens here on earth. And God has made this so hard for us humans to do.... Then I decided to find out all I could about wisdom and foolishness. Soon I realized that this too was as senseless as chasing the wind" (1:13, 17, CEV).

"Father Lucifer, you never looked so sane ..."

— Tori Amos, "Father Lucifer," *Boys for Pele*

Star Trek: Deep Space Nine has had a tendency to deal with religious issues more than most programs. Of the eight or so episodes I watched, three had main plot-lines dealing with religion, including one in which a character struggles with the dilemma of what to do when his god tells him he should not marry the woman he loves. Another dealt with the problem of cults and charismatic leaders who truly believe they are touched by the divine. Other episodes did not have reli-

dropped between 1986 to 1996 from 17 per cent to 14 per cent.

Yet, a 1995 survey revealed that more than 81 per cent of Canadians believed in God.

Anyone who thinks today's generation doesn't care about religion or doesn't struggle with faith is walking around with his or

Mainline churches have been excluded or have opted out of the religious debate going on all around us

"What I learned I rejected but I believe again ... If I jump in this fountain, will I be forgiven?"

— Alanis Morissette, "Forgiven," *Jagged Little Pill*

gion as the main theme, but touched on it in sub-plots.

And here, I thought, today's society doesn't care about religion.

According to Statistics Canada's 1991 census, 3,386,400 Canadians have no religious affiliation, or 12.5 per cent of a population of 26,994,000. The census also revealed 45.7 per cent are Roman Catholic and 36.2 per cent are Protestant. In the 1996 General Social Survey, 14 per cent of Canadians age 15 and over declared they had no religious affiliation. In contrast, in 1961, less than 1 per cent of Canadians said they had no religious affiliation.

Furthermore, among those who stated they were affiliated with a religion, 32 per cent did not attend religious services

her eyes closed and ears blocked. Television shows like *Deep Space Nine*, *Babylon 5* and *Touched by an Angel* regularly deal with religious issues. Newspaper editorial sections are filled with debates on moral and ethical issues.

In a random sampling of the CDs on my shelf (among which there are no "Christian rock" groups), 17 deal explic-

itly or subtly with religious/faith/belief/values issues, 11 do not, four are instrumental. Next to sappy love songs, the largest category of songs heard on the radio could probably be titled something like "struggling to deal with life." No, they're not all explicitly religious and, if they deal with institutional religion at all,

"I'd break bread and wine if there was a church I could receive in 'Cos I need it now"

— U2, "Acrobat," *Achtung Baby*

Countless generations later, our generation is still chasing the wind, trying to understand. But today's churches no longer seem part of that chase. **R**

Kathy Cawsey received her M.Phil. degree from Oxford University, England. E-mail Kathy at kcawsey@hotmail.com.

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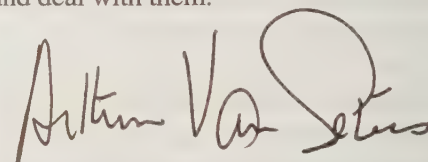
(Continued from page 4)

LORD has chosen Zion; he has desired it for his habitation." I felt a deep sadness come over me as I read these words; then, anger and shame. This was not Zion, and God was clearly not at home in that room; God was immediately below the chapel floor, weeping in the dungeons.

There are still lots of Dutch names along the Ghana coast, descendants of the slave women chosen by the Dutch governor or other officers to satisfy their lust. They were not sold to the slave ships but kept as so-called "half-breeds." They were allowed to serve in the castle. Later, they moved into the nearby village where they were resented because they seemed to regard themselves as superior. So African was pitted against African.

As we were driving back to Accra, I wondered aloud whether any of the countries involved in the slave trade had ever apologized. It is estimated the African slave trade as a whole created a holocaust of 30 million people. I wonder, specifically, if the Reformed Church in the Netherlands has ever seriously discussed this. I could ask the same of Roman Catholics in Portugal or of the Church of England in Britain.

There is still healing to be done — healing for the people of Ghana and healing for the Dutch (and others) whose heritage is drenched in so much blood. Healing begins with confession, including corporate confession for the sins of the past. It is time to face these histories and deal with them.



Moderator's Itinerary

November 14
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Erratum: The Mission Knocks column in the September 1999 issue inadvertently identified the Dorcas Group of Grace Church, Calgary, as the Dorcas Gordon Group. The *Record* apologizes for the error.

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YOU WERE ASKING?

Burying Our Talents?

I am distressed that a number of congregations in our denomination are hoarding large amounts of money in their trust funds. Is this not wrong? Does the church condone this? There are so many avenues of need, it is hard to accept the self-centredness of these wealthy congregations.

As the minister of a congregation having no legal trust funds of great significance, I have little experience with this. We have a small memorial fund that is administered according to specific guidelines. A percentage of the fund is used to support ministry to people and some of it may be spent on enhancing the sanctuary or the worship of the congregation, such as the purchase of a keyboard. This fund only increases as memorial gifts are donated to it.

It is true some congregations have large amounts of money in trust funds. Such funds are often "tied down" because the money came as a bequest with a specific designation attached. The General Assembly regularly receives bequests designated to the Pension and Benefits Board of the church or to mission work at home or abroad, etc. I am not a lawyer, but I believe changing the use of such a bequest can only be done through the courts, and success is not always guaranteed.

Tony Plomp



Sometimes, the money is not designated and large amounts accumulate. I know several congregations that have used portions of their trust funds to assist in founding new congregations or to start innovative programs they could not support from general congregational revenue. Sometimes, such funds are needed for unexpected, extraordinary expenditures. I recall one church that needed to retiling its roof with tiles shipped from Britain. The church had a "Heritage" designation so only a specific kind of tile could be used.

There are probably a number of our congregations that could be described as "wealthy," although I would think their number is shrinking. Frequently, however, such congregations may be money-rich but people-poor. The congregation has grown smaller, but the large building and the need for its maintenance remains. Non-designated trust funds are often the only way these congregations can continue to minister, and many of them do so effectively.

No doubt there are cases when non-designated trust funds are "hoarded" and a congregation shows a poor understanding of Christian stewardship. I hope such congregations are few and far between. **R**

Please send questions for Rev. Tony Plomp to TONY_PLOMP@bc.sympatico.ca or 4020 Lancelot Dr., Richmond, B.C. V7C 4S3.

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Briefly noted

Deaths: *Douglas Black*, retired minister, July 11; *James Findlay*, retired minister, July 12; *Willis Young*, retired minister, August 16; *Jeanette Bailey*, wife of Mel Bailey, archivist emeritus of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, August 25; *J. Charles Hay*, principal emeritus of Knox College, Toronto, and Moderator of 112th General Assembly, Oct. 1.

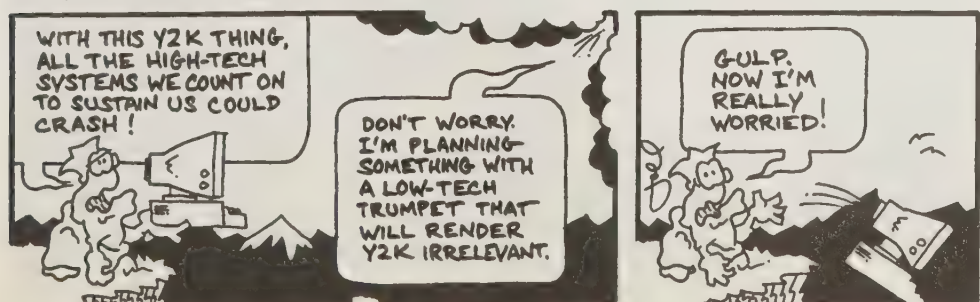
Comings: *Heather Jones* from Malawi, Nov. 8; *Kevin Savage* from Malawi, Nov., date undetermined; *David and Grace Choi* from Nicaragua, Dec. 7.

Goings: *Margaret Vanderzweerde* for India and Nepal, Oct. 4; *Clarence McMullen* for India, Oct., date undetermined.

Gone south: *Rev. Joanne and Wayne Slote* to Lubbock, Texas, as of Nov. 15, where Joanne will be half-time associate executive presbyter (presbytery clerk/treasurer) and half-time pastor of Grace Presbyterian Church.

Installed: *Andrew Foster*, a member of the *Presbyterian Record* Committee, as moderator of the Presbytery of Waterloo-Wellington.

Pontius' Puddle



PCC News

PWS&D issues emergency appeal following Taiwan earthquake

In January 1998, when an ice storm plunged much of Eastern Canada into cold and darkness, the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan (PCT) responded with a donation of \$10,000 to Presbyterian World Service and Development. Now, following a disaster of much greater proportions — one of the strongest earthquakes to hit Taiwan in the past century — PWS&D is asking Canadian Presbyterians to come to the aid of the injured and homeless in Taiwan.

The earthquake, which registered between 7.3 and 7.6 on the Richter scale, left over 2,000 dead, over 6,000 injured and tens of thousands homeless.

The PCT, the country's largest

Protestant denomination, has been co-ordinating the response of its 220,000 members. All routine work of its General Assembly has been set aside, and program secretaries and support staff have been assigned to various earthquake response work teams. The church office has opened its ground floor as a collection depot for donations of sleeping bags, bedding and clothing. In an attempt to widen the circle of assistance, local congregations are co-operating with the PCT co-ordinating centre to set up "service stations" within the three counties hardest hit by the quake — Nantou, Taichung and Hun-Lim. And, in a Taiwanese version of *Presbyterians Sharing...*, the PCT has asked all its

members to donate a day's pay to the relief fund.

International Ministries staff in the region — Betty and Jack Geddes, and Marlene Buwalda — are safe. International Ministries and PWS&D are in daily communication with the church in Taiwan as it responds to immediate needs.

Donations to the relief work can be made through your church offering by clearly marking it "PWS&D — Taiwan Earthquake" and asking the church treasurer to forward it quickly. Or, they can be sent directly to Presbyterian World Service and Development, 50 Wynford Drive, Toronto M3C 1J7. (Income tax receipts will be issued.)

YIM visits Eastern Europe

This past summer, Youth in Mission (YIM) conducted its first project in Eastern Europe. Three young women — Allison Agnew (St. Andrew's Church, King City, Ontario), Jenna Laydon (Memorial Church, Rocky Mountain, Alberta) and Christa Molnar (Riverside Church, Windsor, Ontario) — spent seven weeks participating in four youth camps in Hungary, Croatia and Romania. The group worked closely with Brian Johnston, an International Ministries staff member serving at the Protestant Theological Seminary in Cluj, Romania, and Janos Erdos, a Hungarian Reformed pastor working with the organization Arslonga. Theological students from Romania and Hungary completed the team.

About 40 children participated in a camp in southwestern Hungary. The camp included devotions, Hungarian and English songs, English instruction, art activities, sports and folk-dancing.

In Croatia, the group witnessed firsthand the devastating effects of war. They worshipped with local people in a church partly destroyed by bombs and pockmarked with bullet holes. When they

joined the congregation in singing "God Works in Mysterious Ways" at the end of the service, the profound nature of those familiar words was revealed to them.

The camp in Romania provided the YIM team with a completely different setting from war-torn Croatia — the tranquil and beautiful mountains not

far from the Hungarian border.

Perhaps Allison Agnew summed the seven weeks up for the entire YIM team when she said it was "remarkable to experience God in another part of the world" and to feel the "power and impact of worship." (From a report by Brian Johnston, Cluj, Romania)



The Youth in Mission team and congregation outside the bullet-riddled walls of St. Leszlo Church.

Montreal church and CBC making beautiful music together

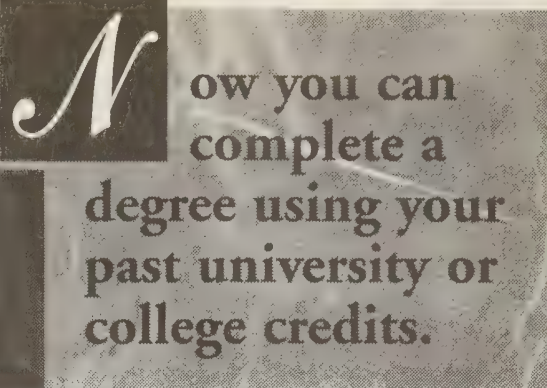
For the past 19 years, people across the country tuning in to CBC Radio on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day have heard carols and music from a service recorded in a Presbyterian Church — the Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul, Montreal.

The idea for the *CBC Sing-In* came from Frances Wainwright, a CBC producer. Wainwright and her friend and colleague, Wayne Riddell, who was director of music at the Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul at the time, planned a service designed to offer the spirit of the Christmas season to people who had no church home. There would be an address from the minister in the middle of the service and an offering toward a local Montreal charity.

Any anxiety about the success of the first sing-in quickly dissipated when the church was filled to overflowing on a Sunday afternoon close to Christmas. That scene has been repeated every year since then.

To mark the program's 20th anniversary, a *CBC Radio Christmas Sing-In* CD has been compiled from music selected as the best from the 19 years of CBC master tapes. *Twelve Tales for Christmas*, a book featuring stories told by Rev. J. S. S. Armour, has also been published. The 16 charitable organizations currently benefiting from the sing-in have been invited to sell the CD and book. They will be offered all materials at cost and will keep all proceeds. They will also share equally in the final tally, after all bills have been paid.

This year, the *CBC Sing-In* will be held at the Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul on December 12. CBC producer Kelly Rice and director of music Bruce Wheatcroft, along with local CBC Radio and TV personalities, will be there to welcome visitors.



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Golden threads among the silver

A "Seniors Are Important" workshop was held recently by the Presbytery of Niagara, with representatives from all but two of the presbytery's congregations participating. Leadership was provided by Rev. Donald Fraser, minister of Queensway Baptist Church, Brantford, Ontario, his wife, Ruth, director of field education and a lecturer in pastoral counselling at McMaster Divinity College, Hamilton, Ontario, and Carol Caswell, RPN, associate pastor at Queensway.

The workshop featured table group discussion of subjects such as the needs, interests and exceptional gifts of seniors. Seniors were identified as people who can add a wonderful angle to every aspect of church life and contribute much to the faith community.

The workshop also included storytelling, during which a panel composed of seniors involved in various vital forms of ministry to their congregations, shared stories of their work.



Table groups formed the heart of the "Seniors Are Important" workshop held by the Presbytery of Niagara.

Presbytery of Pictou approves overture to 2000 General Assembly

The Presbytery of Pictou has approved an overture to the 126th General Assembly asking the Assembly to:

- (a) establish the principle that the positions of associate secretary and general secretary are both forms of ministry, and that the people in those positions have the same protection of the courts as any other minister, i.e., the right of appeal to General Assembly;
- (b) that this principle be reflected in the church's pay structure, so that any across-the-board raises for general secretaries and associate secretaries will be the same percentage and will be implemented at the same time;
- (c) that job descriptions at these levels be changed only with Assembly approval;
- (d) when any position is filled from now on, a brief service of induction take place at General Assembly, or to do otherwise as the General Assembly, in its wisdom, may deem best.

Presbyterian couple opens seniors residence "with a difference"

A young couple from Oakridge Church, London, Ontario, has opened a seniors residence "with a difference." For Ross and Catherine Chapin, it was not a decision made without thought.

For Ross, the conundrum was whether he should say goodbye to the corporate world (he was vice-president of a major health-care institution) and hello to "the role I really wanted: caring for others." But six years ago, when the couple was "thrown" into the world of finding care for Catherine's father, an Alzheimer's patient, they saw

the need for a different kind of care facility.

The result is Inspirit Residences, a place where the Chapins want to promote "enjoyable retirement living" in a community setting that encourages independence, while offering assisted services for security and peace of mind.

"We prayed about this," says Catherine. "We think God is working through us to bring about this type of residence and service."

To finance their venture, the Chapins literally "sold the farm" — a country property near London where they had

lived for the past four years. Six other investors have since joined the enterprise.

Ross points out that the congregation of Oakridge Church has been very supportive of the project. Some members are volunteering their services for recreational and other activities. Rev. Terry Ingram, minister of Oakridge, dedicated the chapel at Inspirit Residences.

"They are making it a place where people can live well," says Ingram. "They really wanted to do something for others, and their previous experiences fit them for just such a people-to-people activity." (From a report by Ivor Williams)

Building bridges at Kimbercote

The CaleCon Colloquium, a social justice program of Caledon Contemporaries, sponsored a "Building Bridges" weekend at Kimbercote, near Meaford, Ontario, this past summer. The group looked at ways of building bridges across, what they see as, a politically administered growing gap in inter-group communication across Ontario: bridges between faith communities, bridges between faith communities and the secular world, and bridges with community building allies such as the Centre for Social Justice.

Leadership for the weekend was provided by Patricia Hanna, a retired minister with Gateway Community Church, Toronto, Lee McKenna DuCharme of the Con-

sultancy for Social and Organizational Change, and Betty Mitchell, music dir-

ector at Glebe Church, Toronto. (From a report by Valerie Dunn)



"Building Bridges" was the theme for a gathering of social justice-minded people sponsored by the CaleCom Colloquium at Kimbercote, near Meaford, Ontario.

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Presbyterian
World Service
and Development

Other News

Ring in the new millennium

Every church in Canada is being asked to ring its bells on January 1, 2000, to celebrate the third millennium of Christianity as part of a project that has united one of the broadest coalitions of Christians ever seen in the country. The project, "Together 2000: Christians in Canada honouring Jesus," is sponsored by the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC) and the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC).

The CCC has 19 member and associate member denominations, including

most mainstream Protestant, Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches. The EFC is a national association of 32 evangelical denominations and 1,000 local congregations, and many other Christian organizations.

The project is significant because, historically, there has been a tendency for evangelical Christians and those involved in ecumenical organizations to regard each other with suspicion. Never before have the two organizations co-sponsored a project. (ENI)

Exchange program for ministerial personnel established

In 1992, Barrie Gray, a minister of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), with the assistance of his wife, Ann, began Clergy Exchange International, an organization to facilitate short-term educational exchanges between clergy. Gray believed such exchanges could widen and enrich the church's ministry.

Wishing to expand this ministry, representatives from Australia, Canada, England, New Zealand, Scotland and the United States met for a week in Fort Worth, Texas, in June 1999 to plot the future of a new organization that would be more internationally based. Out of these

meetings came International Ministry Exchange, an organization to promote and arrange exchanges of ministers and ministerial personnel in their churches. There is no charge to enrol in this program and some scholarship funding is available.

Shaun Seaman from Ottawa and John Congram from Toronto represented The Presbyterian Church in Canada at these meetings.

For more information, contact International Ministry Exchange, Box 51927, Phoenix, Arizona 85076-1927; telephone 480-785-7068 or visit the Web site: www.clergyexchange.org.

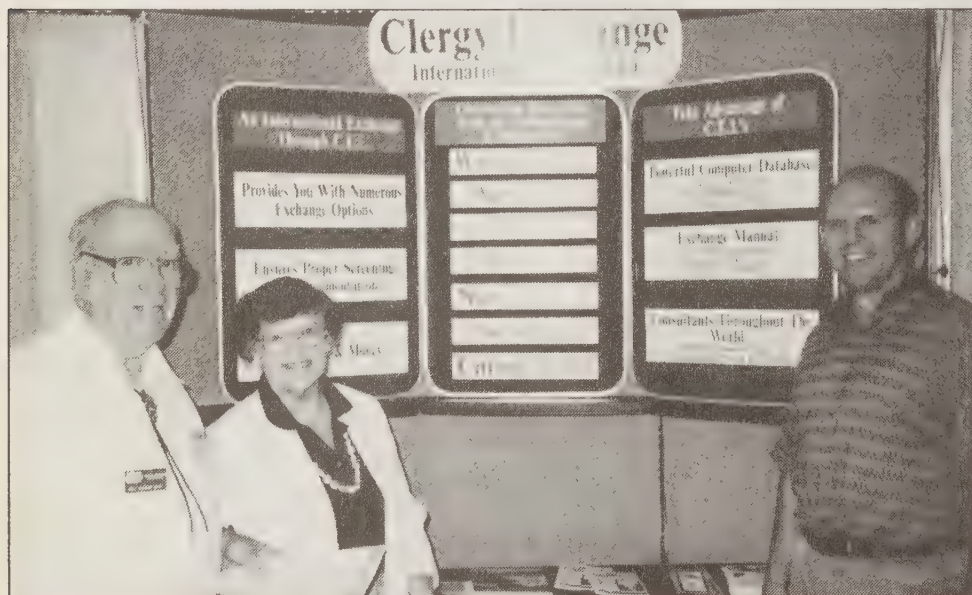
Ecumenical group sponsors workshop on farm crisis

"It is the 1980s all over again, only this time every farm family is at risk." That was the message delivered to clergy, lay leaders and farmers at a one-day workshop sponsored by the Ecumenical Rural Life Committee, a group composed of Anglican, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic and United Church rural ministry representatives in southwestern Ontario. The workshop, held in Exeter, Ontario, August 24, featured Judy and Bill Heffernan as guest speakers.

Judy Heffernan, executive director of the Heartland Network for Town and Rural Ministries of the United Methodist Church in the United States, described the emotional and spiritual impact the loss of a farm has on a family. Many farmers feel called by God so the loss of the farm means losing their vocation. She challenged clergy with a series of ways to describe rural ministry. Ministers should be: Gospel bearers, advocates for youth and children, rumour monitors, trainers of leaders, vision bearers, and a visible, caring presence in their community.

Bill Heffernan, professor of rural sociology at the University of Missouri, and a farmer, discussed the business shifts behind the current crisis. Food corporations provide farmers with animals and feed. Essentially, the corporations own the animals from birth to slaughterhouse. The farmer is paid for the "piece-work" of growing the animals. The handful of companies that control seed and feed production are the same companies that control the processing of food products.

Heffernan advocates the creation of food circles, bringing farmers and consumers into direct contact. Consumers would buy fruit and vegetables, even meat, directly from the farmers, leaving the farmers with a fair price and the consumers with confidence in the quality of their food. He also suggests local congregational clusters could become forums for the birthing of food circles. (From a report by Peter Bush)



Shaun Seaman, minister of Trinity Church, Kanata, Ont., with Barrie and Ann Gray, founders of Clergy Exchange International.

News Scan

And, now, a word from Our Sponsor

Keith Knight, associate secretary for Resource Production and Communication, recently appeared on *Michael Coren Live*, a late-night talk show on the Crossroads Television Network. Keith was invited to appear on the show in response to an article he wrote for the *Toronto Star* about the place of the Lord's Prayer in the public school classroom. Several callers phoned to express their concern about the public education system and the role of faith and religion within the system.

Hot under the collar

In California's Ventura County, seven chaplains take turns travelling with fire-

fighters. The clerics, who arrive at most fires or accidents wearing fire jackets and helmets, minister to the spiritual needs of both victims and fire department personnel. "We get to live every kid's dream of riding on the fire truck," says chaplain Rabbi John Sherwood. (*The Globe and Mail*)

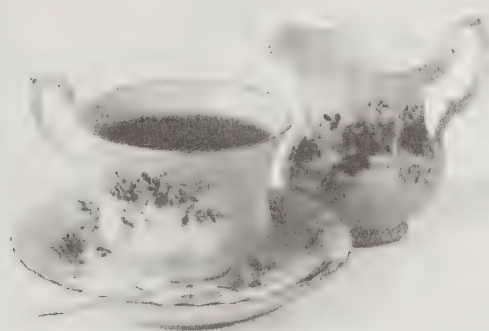
That, and a granola bar

An American who spent 40 days in the West Australian desert and was given up for dead by the Australian authorities, has credited readings from the Bible as a source of strength during his trek. The biblical passages listed by Alaskan firefighter Robert Bogucki in an open letter to thank those who searched for him and cared for him in-

clude two extracts particularly suited to his pilgrimage — Isaiah 40:3 and Jeremiah 6:16. Bogucki, who told reporters after his rescue that he wanted to "just make peace with God" during his time in the remote Great Sandy Desert, carried a bound edition of the Bible with him for all but the last three days of his ordeal. He abandoned it, along with clothing and other possessions, as he became weaker. (*ENI*)

Turning the other cheek

A group of 40 Christian schools in the United Kingdom has launched a legal fight for the right to administer corporal punishment to pupils. It was outlawed in all schools by the British Parliament in September. (*ENI*)



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PEOPLE & PLACES

THE CONGREGATION OF Kings Church, New Minas, N.S., celebrated the official sod-turning for the new church building on May 30. Construction was to be completed this fall. Turning the sod are: (left shovel) Vicki Bowen, Brian Croft, Shelby Caldwell; (middle shovel) John Brown, Dorothy Maynard, Barry MacDonald; (right shovel) Rev. P. A. MacDonald, clerk of presbytery, and Rev. Tim Archibald, minister of Kings Church. Kings was constituted as a congregation in 1990 and received its 1.4-hectare building site as a gift from Live the Vision.



THE CONGREGATION OF St. Paul's Church, Thornbury, Ont., recently completed an extension to the church building. The extension includes a great hall, an office, a choir room, an upstairs kitchen and washroom, and an elevator to the lobby and to downstairs where a gym/dining-room and washrooms are located.



THE CONGREGATION OF Kirk-On-The-Hill, Fonthill, Ont., celebrated its 40th anniversary in May. Among those present were the five charter members remaining with the congregation (L to R): Margaret McLeod, Ralph Young, George Rowan, Gerry MacDonald and Regina MacDonald.



ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, Medicine Hat, Alta., kicked off its Fanning the FLAMES program on General Assembly Sunday, June 6, with the oldest attending member, Edna Smith, and youngest member, Adam Park, sharing duties at a cake-cutting ceremony.



A POT-LUCK SUPPER sponsored by the session and board of managers was held at Bethel Church, Sydney, N.S., in celebration of the 150th anniversary of Presbyterian witness in Sydney. Gwen Shepard, chairperson of the board, and Charles Greaves, clerk of session (right), join Rev. Robert Lyle and senior elder James O. Kerr (seated) in cutting the cake.

Please note: Photos submitted for People & Places must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope if they are to be returned. Also, please try to ensure all pictures are clear and do not include a multitude of people. Colour or black-and-white photos are acceptable, but negatives and slides cannot be used. Thank you.

PEOPLE & PLACES

EIGHT YOUNG PEOPLE and three adults from St. Andrew's Church, Hanover, Ont., participated in a World Vision 30-hour famine, raising \$1,307.28. In the front row are (L to R) Matthew Cook, Jaclyn Ross and Katie Shearer. In the middle are Susan Penfold and Rev. Alice Wilson. In the back are Scott Deitrich, Barb Clarke, Beth Clarke, Audrey Murdoch and Nelson Clarke (missing is Darlene Deitrich). This is the fourth year the young people have been involved in the famine program.



THE CHURCH SCHOOL CHILDREN of Knox Church, Guelph, Ont., and their families were challenged to bring one non-perishable food item to church each Sunday in Lent. A few of the children are pictured with some of the more than 135 kilograms of food items collected. All donations were taken to the Fair Share Food Shelf at a neighbouring church.

THE YOUTH GROUPS OF Knox Church, Vankleek Hill, Ont., and Vankleek Hill Baptist Church entered a float together in the local Christmas parade. Providing the transportation was Norman Kerr of Knox Church and his Belgian team, Patty and Megan.



AFTER EACH COMMUNION SERVICE at St. Andrew's Church, Belleville, Ont., an elder makes appointments for the minister, Rev. Craig Cribar, to visit some of congregation's 32 shut-ins and serve Communion to them. To celebrate the Year of Older Persons, the shut-ins were invited to attend Communion at the church on June 13. Those attending included:

(L to R) Frieda Matthews, Don Anderson, Mary Ostofi, Donald Gooding, Iva Fallis, Irene Ray, John Craig and Irene Muir.



A CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION for 38 years of service as elder, hospital visitor and in the card ministry of Knox Church, Bracebridge, Ont., was presented to Colin and Mildred MacDougald.



PEOPLE & PLACES

FIVE GREAT-GRANDCHILDREN of Florence Dennison, a regular attendee at First Church, Pembroke, Ont., were received into membership at First Church recently. Surrounding Florence, who is an elder at Lake Dore Point Church, where services are held only on Sunday evenings in the summer, are (L to R): Megan Resmer, Allison Fabian, Melissa Fabian, Shane Devereux and Chase McKeown.



A BANNER MADE by the church school of Riverside Church, Windsor, Ont., to mark the congregation's 70th anniversary was dedicated recently.



A STAINED GLASS WINDOW depicting the Nativity was dedicated in memory of elder Dan W. Munro and Jean Munro at Barney's River Church, N.S. Presenting the window were their daughters, Isabel Hawboldt (left) and Pearl Robertson.



THE SESSION OF Calvin Church, Kitchener, Ont., paid tribute to its past clerks during a recent meeting. Honoured were: the late Dr. Walter Armstrong (1961-65); Bill Artindale (1965-81), seated centre; Bruce Chambers (1981-85, 1990-91), seated left; Brant Smith (1985-1990), absent; and Jim McNeill (1991-98), seated right. The current elders performed a ceremony based on the Tree of Life.



MEMBERS OF ST. GILES CHURCH, Sarnia, Ont., had good reason to attend this year's convocation at Knox College, Toronto. Rev. Terry Samuel (left) was supervising pastor for graduates Jeanette Fleischer (second from left) and Kristy Todd during their summer placements at St. Giles. And Faye Wilson, an elder at St. Giles, saw her brother, Rev. Harry Waite (right), receive an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree.

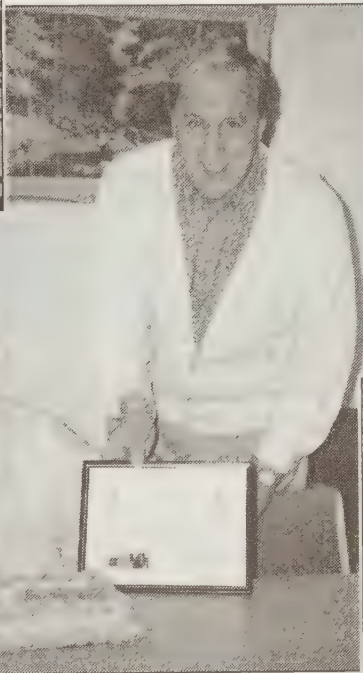


PEOPLE & PLACES

A KIRKIN' O' THE TARTAN was held at Valetta Church, Merlin, Ont., with piper Glen McGregor, guest speaker Robert Paxton and Rev. Kate Pfeffer-McIntosh leading in the service.



THE MACLEOD Atlantic Mission Society of St. Andrew's Church, North River, Cape Breton, N.S., served coffee and muffins to participants in the 11th annual 24-hour Cabot Trail Relay Race. The runners appreciated the muffin break and some paused for a moment in the sanctuary.

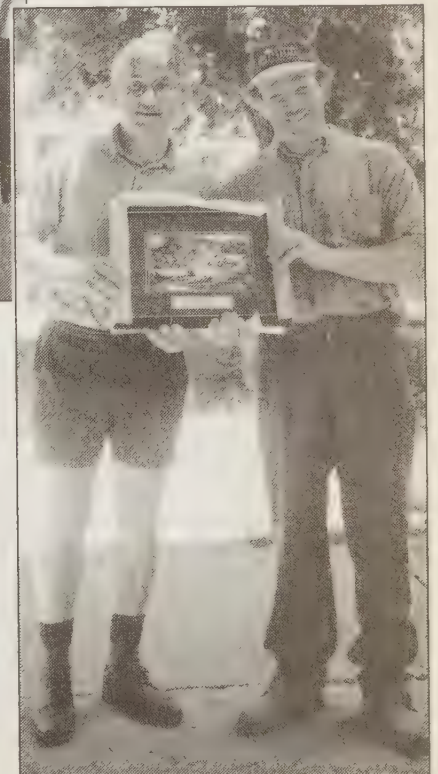


THE SESSION OF Knox Church, Wallaceburg, Ont., expressed its thanks to Jim Burgess who retired as an elder after 50 years of service. He is shown receiving a certificate of appreciation from Rev. Hugh Appèl on behalf of the congregation.

DURING THIS YEAR'S church school summer picnic at Cookstown Church, Ont., Norm Cook (right) was recognized for his many years as church school superintendent. Making the presentation was Larry Brolley, clerk of session. The picnic, held after the worship service, came complete with clowns, face-painting and sack races.



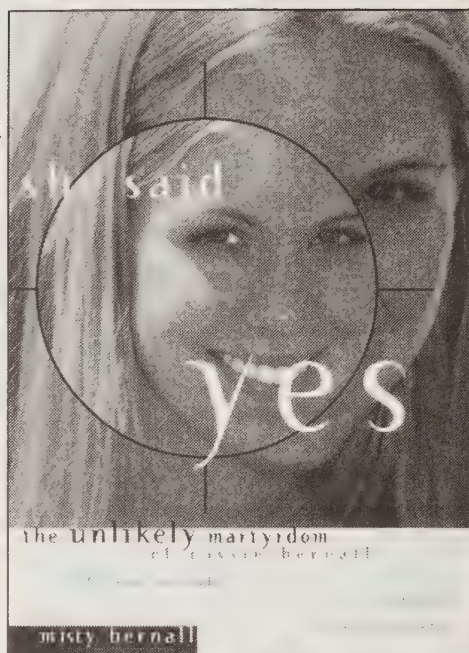
THE CONGREGATION OF Calvin Church, North Bay, Ont., recently celebrated the 50th anniversary of Earl Craig's ordination as an elder. Earl served as representative elder for many years and was clerk of session for 25 years. Presenting him with a commemorative plaque is elder Jack Spillar.



***She Said Yes* by Misty Bernall**
(Harper, 1999, \$26.50). Reviewed by
John Congram.

Many have described Cassie Bernall as a modern Christian martyr. On April 20, 1999, two wild-eyed, violent teenagers entered Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado. They were well-armed with high-powered weapons and bombs. When they were done, 14 students (including the two murderers) and a teacher lay dead. One was Cassie Bernall. She is remembered because of the way she died. In the midst of the rampage, one of the boys pressed a gun to Cassie's head and asked her if she believed in God. When she said yes, he shot her.

In *She Said Yes*, Cassie's mother, Misty, shares Cassie's story, not only of



her violent death and their grief but of Cassie's troubled teenage years. She provides a moving, honest account of parents struggling with a difficult and

sometimes dangerous teenager. Misty tells this story with the help of firsthand accounts from other members of the family and friends, plus letters, poems and notes that Cassie left behind.

Before her death, Cassie experienced a conversion experience during a church retreat. She underwent a remarkable change, but still continued to struggle with many of the demons from her past. She was like many of the teenagers of her generation — maybe like your own son or daughter.

We remember her because, when everything was on the line, she did not flinch. We wonder what we might have done.

Was Cassie a modern Christian martyr? You will have to read the book and decide for yourself.

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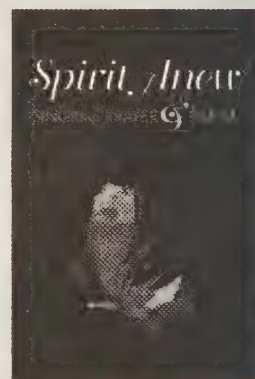
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Travel That Can Change Your Life: How to Create a Transformative Experience by Jeffrey Kottler (*Jossey-Bass, 1997, \$36.50*). Reviewed by Dorothy Henderson.

More people are travelling in this decade than at any previous time. The author of *Travel That Can Change Your Life* advocates we take seriously how travel can change us in a lasting and profound way.

Travelling as a transformative experience begins with mental preparation. We often rush up to the last minute before our vacation, neglecting to ask important questions such as: What would I like to happen as a result of my trip? In what specific ways would I like to be a different person from the one who left? What is it about the trip I dread most? How will I follow through on what I started after I return home?

The author has practical suggestions for transformative travel: concentrate on people rather than on places, set aside your usual sense of time, travel with an

anthropology mind-set (join the host culture, become part of daily rituals, eat the local foods, speak the language as much as possible) and watch carefully what is going on around you.

There is a helpful chapter on the six stages we move through when we travel and an excellent description of how to keep a travel journal to help you create meaning from your experiences. The author suggests, for instance, that travellers note connections to their past, making links with new travel experiences and past memories or themes. He also suggests that the traveller note interesting dialogue, new skills learned, declarations of commitment and leave space in the journal for both vivid portraits and representative snapshots.

This book is for people who travel and expect a radical life change because of the trip. Not all of us are like that, the author warns. Some of us are "psychocentrics," preferring travel to familiar places, while others are "allocentrics" who thrive on unpredictability. Our

travel plans reflect these orientations. The first group goes to Disney World, Las Vegas and Club Med while the latter group prefers Borneo, Tasmania and white water rafting. This book speaks to people who find themselves — temporarily or permanently — in the latter group.

This book is an excellent study for travellers who want to make the most of a trip. Parts of the book are also helpful for congregations preparing for a mission excursion.

Dorothy Henderson has responsibility for Christian education and ministry with children and youth at national church offices.

Prayers From Our Hearts by E. Lynne Geddes (*Eagle, 1999, \$10*).

When Lynne's husband served at Glenbrook Presbyterian Church in Mississauga, Ontario, she attended a women's Bible study group. One of the books they studied was *Hush! Hush! It's time to*

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REVIEWS

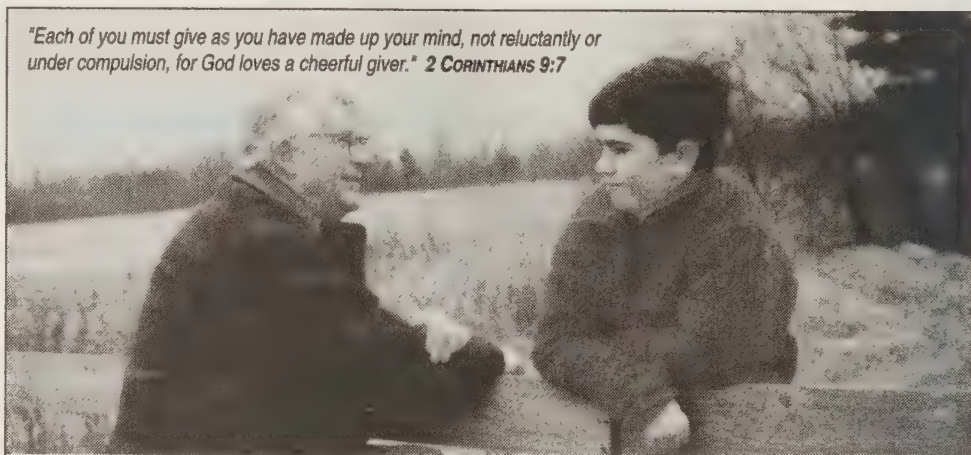
pray — but how? by Jill Briscoe. The
pattern of prayer suggested by the author
became an integral part of Lynne's life.
When the Geddesees moved to South
Gate Church in Hamilton, Ontario, one
of the first studies of the Morning Break
Bible Study group was on prayer. At the
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DEATHS

PÁNDY-SZEKERES, DR. LÁSZLO, age 79, died on August 9, 1999.

László was born in Hungary. While there, between 1942 and 1947, he obtained two doctorates. He practised law in Hungary, was in the army for two years and became a prisoner of war. Being active in politics and because of speaking out against the Communist regime, László was arrested in 1947 and spent seven months in solitary confinement.

Upon release, he and his wife immigrated to Canada in 1950 via Switzerland. Following studies at Knox College, he was ordained in Calvin Presbyterian Church, Delhi, Ont., a Hungarian-speaking congregation; he retired from Delhi in 1978 after 22 years. He was very active in The Presbyterian Church in Canada at all levels and in various multicultural and Hungarian organizations.

László is survived by his beloved wife, Piroska, and children László, David, Abel and Piri.

YOUNG, REV. WILLIS ARNOLD, passed away on August 16, 1999, in his 80th year. The Presbytery of Waterloo-Wellington records its thanksgiving to God for his life and ministry.

Willis Young was born in London, Ontario, where his family attended New St. James Presbyterian Church. Under the inspiration and influence of Dr. James MacKay, the three brothers Arthur, Norman and Willis received the call to ministry and all three served in the Presbytery of Waterloo-Wellington in the 1970s.

Following his graduation from the University of Western Ontario and from Knox College, Young was ordained by the Presbytery of London on April 11, 1946. His formal ministry began in the Synod of the Atlantic Provinces where he served at Tyne Valley, P.E.I., Port Elgin, N.B., and New Carlisle, Que. Upon his return to Ontario, he ministered at St. David's (Presbytery of Niagara), Fergus and Orangeville. In 1985, he and his wife, Eileen, retired to Guelph, Ont.

In the congregation of St. Andrew's, Guelph, Young continued his ministry, serving as a minister of visitation for a number of years. He also sang in the choir and played the piano for singsongs, thus sharing his musical talents with others.

Willis Young was a caring pastor, a faithful preacher, a good husband, father and grandfather. He is survived by his wife, Eileen; his children, Ruth, David, Barbara,

Catherine; 10 grandchildren; and his brother, Norman.

A memorial service was held in St. Andrew's Church, Guelph, on August 28, conducted by The Rev. Dr. Peter Darch and The Rev. Dr. Russell Hall, a lifelong friend. Both Dr. Darch and Dr. Hall are products of New St. James. This fitting service not only celebrated the life and ministry of Willis Young, but also paid tribute to the ministers and congregation of New St. James for giving many young people to the ministry of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

BATES, JESSIE HELEN, active member and elder of Knox Presbyterian Church, Teeswater, Ont.; a former representative elder to presbytery and a life member of the WMS, Aug. 14, 1999.

BURNS, DORA, 86, lifelong faithful member, St. Andrew's Church, Dresden, Ont., lifelong choir member, Ladies Heather Club member, WMS life member, died Aug. 31, 1999.

CARROLL, GORDON, age 91, lifelong member, Knox Presbyterian Church, Grand Valley, Ont., died Aug. 25, 1999.

COUNTER, NETTIE IRENE, a longtime faithful member of First Presbyterian Church, Chatham, Ont.

GRANT, BEULAH, 89, member 53 years, St. Paul's, Woodstock, N.B., and, previously, Grace, Millerton, N.B., Sept. 26.

HAUGHTON, LESLIE CHARLES, of St. David's Presbyterian Church, Hamilton, Ont., passed away suddenly in the Henderson General Hospital on Tuesday, June 29, 1999. His activities in the church were many, serving on the board of managers, as a member of session and as budget secretary for 51 years. He was also interested in the mission and outreach of the church, helping with children's and boys' work. He leaves to mourn his passing: his wife, the former Florence Oswald, daughter Janice and one grandson, Benjamin. Son Douglas predeceased him.

MacDONALD, ALEX R., 75, elder, St. Andrew's, Wingham, Ont., Aug. 12, 1999.

McJANET, DAVID JOHN, 60, died July 30, 1999. Lifetime member of St. Stephen's, Ottawa. Elder for 33 years, and clerk of session at his death, active over the years as church school superintendent, choir member and representative elder for 14 years. David is survived by his wife, Ann, daughters Elizabeth and Margaret, and son Hugh and their families. A faithful servant who will be sadly missed.

McMILLAN, ORLA JACQUELINE, elder, clerk of session, who dedicated so much of her life to St. John's Presbyterian Church in

Grimsby, Ont., Sept. 3, 1999. A woman who touched so many hearts in the community, the WMS, the presbytery. Thanks be to God for her ministry among us.

McPHEE, IAN DUNCAN, son of The Rev. Ted and Margaret McPhee, died in Edmonton on Sept. 3, 1999, at the age of 47. He was formerly an elder at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church, Ottawa, and director of the Union Mission in Ottawa, and formerly an elder and clerk of session at Knox Presbyterian Church, Wanham, Alta. For the past 12 years, he was a faculty member at Peace River Bible Institute in Sexsmith, Alta. He is survived by his wife, Sue, and their two children, Heather and David. His warm witness, sound instruction and loving encouragement will be missed by all who knew Ian.

MURRAY, AUDREY, loving mother, retired chemist, lover of the out-of-doors, faithful church member, wise and cheerful elder for many years, Paris Presbyterian Church, Paris, Ont., Feb. 7, 1999.

MURRAY, MARY JEAN, a longtime faithful member of First Presbyterian Church, Chatham, Ont.

TOUGH, DAVID, dear husband of Anne, widely known hardware merchant, faithful church member, serving in many ways, longtime elder, Paris Presbyterian Church, Paris, Ont., June 29, 1999.

INDUCTIONS and RECOGNITIONS

Awad, Rev. Nader, Maisonneuve-St. Cuthberts, Montreal, Sept. 19.

DeWolfe, Rev. D. Laurence, Presbyterian Church of St. David, Halifax, Sept. 8.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES and INTERIM MODERATORS

Synod of the Atlantic Provinces

Little Narrows, N.S.; Whycocomagh, St. Andrew's. Rev. R. Ritchie Robinson, Site 12, Box 4, RR 1, Bras d'Or, N.S. B0C 1B0.

Lower Sackville, N.S., First Sackville. Rev. Cynthia Chenard, Box 2554, Dartmouth, N.S. B2W 4B7.

Merigomish, N.S., St. Paul's; French River. Rev. Charles McPherson, Box 132, Stellarton, N.S. B0K 1S0.

New Glasgow, N.S., Westminster. Rev. Glenn Cooper, Box 1078, Westville, N.S. B0K 2A0.

St. John's, Nfld., St. David's. Rev. Ian S. Wishart, 5 Chestnut Place, St. John's, Nfld. A1B 2T1.

Springhill, N.S., St. David's; Oxford, St. James; Riverview, St. Andrew's. Rev. Mark McLennan, RR 2, Scotsburn, N.S. B0K 1R0.

The Transitions column welcomes announcements of special events such as births, marriages, anniversaries, baptisms and the reception of new members, as well as death notices. The rate is 90 cents per word or \$43 per column inch (the lower amount) plus GST.

All notices of pulpit vacancies, recognitions, ordinations and inductions will be charged to congregations: \$10 for the basic notice and 90 cents per word for additional information. (There will be no charge to congregations on the Every Home or Club 50 plans.)

Synod of Quebec and Eastern Ontario

Beaconsfield, Que., Briarwood. Rev. Glynis Williams, Action Réfugiés Montreal, 1410 Guy, Montreal, Que. H3H 2L7.

Beauharnois, Que., St. Edward's; Valleyfield, Valleyfield Church (part-time). Search Committee, 79 St. Georges St., Beauharnois, Que. J6N 1Y9.

Dunvegan, Ont., Kenyon; Kirk Hill, St. Columba. Rev. Edward O'Neill, Box 7, Maxville, Ont. K0C 1T0.

Fort-Coulonge, Que., St. Andrew's; Bristol, Bristol Memorial. Rev. Ruth Syme, Box 1983, Deep River, Ont. K0J 1P0.

Ingleside, Ont., St. Matthew's (part time). Rev. Ian MacMillan, 18220 S. Branch Rd., Cornwall, Ont. K6H 5R6.

Iroquois, Knox; Cardinal, St. Andrew's and St. James. Rev. Ian MacLean, PO Box 94, Prescott, Ont. K0E 1T0.

Montreal, Chambit Church. Rev. Barry Mack, 496 Birch Ave., St. Lambert, Que. J4P 2M8.

Montreal, Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul. Rev. J.C. McLelland, 121 Alston Rd., Pointe-Claire, Que. H9R 3E2.

Montreal, Knox Crescent Kensington and First. Rev. Richard Topping, 3415 Redpath St., Montreal, Que. H3G 2G2.

Montreal, Korean. Rev. John Kim, 298 Rudar Rd., Mississauga, Ont. L5A 1S3.

Pierrefonds, Que., Westminster (part time).

Rev. James Douglas, 1345 Lapointe, St. Laurent, Que. H4L 1K5.

Synod of Toronto and Kingston

Arthur, St. Andrew's; Gordonville, St. Andrew's. Rev. J. Johnson, Box 133, Drayton, Ont. N0G 1P0; 905-343-3201.

Ashburn, Burns. Rev. Andrew Allison, Box 138, Leaskdale, Ont. L0C 1C0; 905-852-1171; leaskdalepres@interhop.net.

Aurora, St. Andrew's. Rev. Helen Smith, PO Box 309, Station B, Toronto, Ont. M5T 2W2; rhsmith@pathcom.com.

Bermuda, Hamilton, St. Andrew's. Rev. Nora Gorham, 69 Rowanwood Ave., Toronto, Ont. M4W 1Y8.

Bolton, Caven. Rev. Issa A. Saliba, 9846 Keele St., Box 5097, Maple, Ont. L6A 1R6.

Bowmanville, St. Andrew's. Rev. David McBride, PO Box 311, Port Hope, Ont. L1A 3W4.

Brampton, St. Andrew's. Rev. Peter Barrow, 38 Edith St., Georgetown, Ont. L7G 3B1.

Cambridge, Knox's Galt. Rev. Kevin Livingston, St. Andrew's Hespeler Church, 73 Queen St. E, Cambridge, Ont. N3C 2A9.

Collingwood, First (associate minister). Search Committee, 200 Maple St., Collingwood, Ont. L9Y 2R2.

Guelph, Knox. Rev. Linda Bell, 2 Cross St., Elmira, Ont. N3B 2S5.

Kitchener, Calvin. Rev. Angus Sutherland,

Central Presbyterian Church, Queen's Square, Cambridge, Ont. N1S 1H4.

Kitchener, St. Andrew's. Rev. Murray Laurenson, 360 Tower St. N, Fergus, Ont. N1M 2N7.

Oakville, Knox Sixteen. Rev. Wayne Baswick, 36 Campbell Dr., Brampton, Ont. L6X 2H7; 905-456-1727.

Parry Sound, St. Andrew's. Rev. Raye Brown, 1 High St., Huntsville, Ont. P1H 1P2.

Sutton West, St. Andrew's. Rev. Margaret Robertson, 50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, Ont. M3C 1J7; 416-441-1111; mroberts@presbyterian.ca.

Toronto, All People (Mahn-Min). Rev. In Kee Kim, 3625 Haven Glenn, Mississauga, Ont. L4X 1X7.

Toronto, Gateway Community. Rev. Robert Syme, 19 Queensbury Ave., Toronto, Ont. M1N 2X8.

Toronto, Grace (Etobicoke). Rev. William Adamson, 299 Mill Rd. #902, Etobicoke, Ont. M9C 4V9.

Toronto, Knox (Spadina). Rev. Bob Fournery, 1 Glenview Ave., Toronto, Ont. M4R 1P5.

Toronto, Patterson. Rev. Gordon Fish, 15 Lambeth Rd., Toronto, Ont. M9A 2Y6.

Toronto, Weston. Rev. Clyde Ervine, 15 Lambeth Rd., Toronto, Ont. M9A 2Y6.

Tweed, St. Andrew's. Rev. Chen-Chen Abbott, Box 118, Stirling, Ont. K0K 3E0.

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ArithmeCode by Dave Mitchell

Find the value of each symbol by doing the arithmetic. Replace each symbol with the letter which corresponds to its value to find the *ArithmeCode* word below. Category: NUMBERS 21:12

- i $825 \div 3 \div 5 \div 11 = \square$
ii $(80\% \text{ of } \square) \times (16 - \square - 10) = \diamond$
iii $(\square \times \diamond) - (\square - \diamond) - 1 = \blacklozenge$
iv $(2/3 \text{ of } \blacklozenge) - \diamond - (\square - 2) = \blacksquare$
v $(\blacksquare \times \square) + (1/4 \text{ of } \diamond) = \bullet$

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z		
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	

The *ArithmeCode* word is:

● □ ◆ ■ ♦

ArithmeCode answer from last issue: ENOCH © 1999

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024

TRANSITIONS

wage, 140 Guildwood Pkwy., Toronto, Ont. M1E 1P4.

Synod of Southwestern Ontario

Ailsa Craig, Ailsa Craig Church. Rev. John Bannerman, 342 Pond Mills Rd., London, Ont. N5Z 3X5; 519-681-7242.

Blenheim, Blenheim Church (half-time). Rev. Evelyn Carpenter, 60 Fifth St., Chatham, Ont. N7M 4V7.

Brantford, Alexandra. Rev. Mark B. Gaskin, 97 Wellington St., Brantford, Ont. N3T 2M1; 519-752-4932; cpc@bfree.on.ca.

Crinan, Argyle; Largie, Duff's. Rev. Jennifer Cameron, RR 2, Glencoe, Ont. N0L 1M0.

Delhi, Calvin; Brantford, Pleasant Ridge. Rev. Warren McKinnon, 619 Northdale Dr., Woodstock, Ont. N4S 5K7.

Dundalk, Erskine; Swinton Park, St. Andrew's. Rev. Pearl Vasarhelyi, General Delivery, Holstein, Ont. N0G 2A0.

Forest, St. James. Rev. Joop Eenkhoorn, 311 Michigan Ave., Point Edward, Ont. N7V 1G1.

Glencoe, Glencoe Church; Wardsville, St. John's. Rev. Kathryn Strachan, PO Box 72, Appin, Ont. N0L 1A0.

Hagersville, St. Andrew's; Port Dover, Knox. Rev. Thomas G. Vais, 117 Argyle St. N, Caledonia, Ont. N3W 1B8.

Komoka; North Caradoc; Mount Brydges, St. Andrew's. Rev. Dennis Carrothers, 901-700 Wonderland Rd. N, London, Ont. N6H 4V3.

London, Westmount. Rev. Karen Timbers, 370 Ridout St., London, Ont. N6C 3Z7; gkmstm@exculink.com.

Markdale, Cooke's; Feversham, Burn's. Mr. Rick Eidenmueller, RR 6, Markdale, Ont. N0C 1H0.

Meaford, Knox. Rev. Bill Vanderstelt, Box 86, Chatsworth, Ont. N0H 1G0.

Niagara Falls, Stamford. Rev. Martin Wehrmann, c/o 515 Scott St., St. Catharines, Ont. L2M 3X3.

Petrolia, St. Andrew's; Dawn, Knox. Rev. Philip Wilson, PO Box 1381, Corunna, Ont. N0N 1G0.

Port Elgin, Tolmie Memorial; Burgoyne, Knox. Rev. Ted Creen, 865 Second Ave. W, Owen Sound, Ont. N4K 4M6.

Sarnia, St. Andrew's. Rev. Thomas Rodger, 120 S. Russell St., Sarnia, Ont. N7T 3L1.

Thamesville, St. James; Duart. Rev. Mary Templer, Box 93, Dresden, Ont. N0P 1M0.

Tiverton, Knox. Rev. Peggy Kinsman, Box 219, Lucknow, Ont. N0G 2H0.

Windsor, Knox. Rev. W. Scott McAndless, 58 Erie St. S, Leamington, Ont. N8H 3B1.

Synod of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario

Flin Flon, St. Andrew's (half-time, ordained minister). Rev. Margaret Mullin, 1405 Van Horne Ave., Brandon, Man. R7A 1E4; phone/fax: 204-727-4414; mullinm@mb.sympatico.ca.

Full-time regional staff position. Rev. Jean Bryden, Search Committee Convener,

808-9th St. NW, Portage la Prairie, Man. R1N 3L3.

Thunder Bay, Ont., Calvin. Rev. Joanne R. MacOdrum, Box 342, Geraldton, Ont. P0T 1M0.

Thunder Bay, Ont., First. Rev. Bert Vancook, 207 South Brodie St., Thunder Bay, Ont., P7E 1C1.

Winnipeg, St. Andrew's (part-time). Rev. Henry Hildebrandt, Box 447, Kenora, Ont. P9N 3X4.

Synod of Alberta

Calgary, Grace (senior minister as of February 1, 2000). Rev. Brown Milne, 10 Var-moor Pl. NW, Calgary, Alta. T3A 0A1; milnejb@cadvision.com; Web site: www.grace.calgary.ab.ca.

Edmonton, Westmount. Rev. Bruce Kemp, 6104 - 148 St., Edmonton, Alta. T6H 4Z5; bkemp1@telusplanet.net; Fax: 780-439-1676.

Lethbridge, St. Andrew's. Rev. Don Hill, 1818 - 5 Avenue S, Lethbridge, Alta. T1J 0W6; dhill@mox.ab.ca.

Synod of British Columbia

Sooke, Knox. Rev. John Allan, 680 Courtney St., Victoria, B.C. V8W 1C1.

Vancouver, West Vancouver. Rev. Ted Siverns, 335 7th St., New Westminster, B.C. V3M 3K9; tsiverns@planeteeer.com.

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Résumés: Appointment Committee
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Word Scramble Answers from page 50

- | | |
|----------------|------------|
| (1) forgives | (2) punish |
| (3) celebrates | (4) loves |

A Child's Way

A page to share with the children you love

Written by Karen Timbers,
minister of Elmwood Avenue
Church, London, Ont.

A Young Man Learns His Lesson

Scripture Reading: Luke 15:11-24

Poem

"I want it all now to spend as I please,
To leave this farm and be completely free."
So he left his father and his brother too,
Not understanding what he would go through.

He danced and he partied, and his money dwindled fast.
Hungry and alone, he grew downcast.
He worked with pigs that ate better food;
He began to think about his present mood.

He came to his senses, realizing his mistakes;
He would return to his father, though not deserving a break.
He would work for his father as a hired hand;
He knew all he deserved was a reprimand.

His father saw him coming and welcomed him back home.
He threw a great big party, no anger was ever shown.
He knew his son had made mistakes but had chosen to turn around;
Mercy and love he showed his son who once was lost but now was found.

God loves us like this father and guides us as we grow,
And lets us learn from our mistakes so for the future we will know:
That following the ways of God is the best choice we can make
To find the path to happiness each and every day we wake.



Questions to consider

1. What do you think the younger brother learned?
2. Talk about a time when you learned from a mistake you made.
3. Does God punish us when we do wrong?

A note to adults reading this page:

Too often we threaten children with God's punishment instead of helping them to understand that choices bring natural consequences.

Modelling an adult's acceptance of personal responsibility when we make mistakes is a powerful tool we offer for maturity.

Activities

- Word Scramble: (answers on page 49)
 - (1) When we say we are sorry, God **goivfres** us.
 - (2) When we stray away from God, God does not **unpihs** us as we deserve.
 - (3) God **lercaebets** when we learn from our mistakes.
 - (4) No matter what we do, God still **sovel** us.
- Pantomime the poem as someone reads it.

Prayer

Dear God,
Help me to admit when I have done wrong.
Help me to forgive others when they have wronged me.
Amen.

Peace, Peace When There Is No Peace

Wayne G. Smith

Read: Jeremiah 8:10-12, Psalm 137:1-4

The United Nations Web site tells its visitors that the role of UN peacekeepers is to help implement peace agreements, monitor ceasefires, patrol demilitarized zones, create buffer zones between opposing forces and put fighting on hold while negotiators seek peaceful solutions to disputes. This is not a summons issued only to those who tread the world stage but a path that every parent, step-parent, grandparent, guardian and Christian friend is called to walk.

But "walking the walk" is harder than "talking the talk."

What does it mean to be involved in peace-making in times and places where the most inhuman of acts often sets the stage and when the perpetrators of abuse seek to define the terms of peace? How do we help those who serve and those whom we advise when swords and plowshares are made of the same stuff?

In the community where we now live, I often stop at the coffee shop. It helps keep me in touch with the world outside my uniform. When other patrons see my uniform (especially on days when wars and rumours of wars fill the news), their comments echo the lament of the Lord. I must often appear complacent to the red-eyed, early-commute crowd, for their questions reflect the plea of the prophet Jeremiah: "They [Christians?] have treated the wound of my people carelessly, saying, 'Peace, peace,' when there is no peace."

The peacekeeper and those working in humanitarian operations must deal with belligerents involved in conflicts. God also observes and laments again and

again: "They acted shamefully, they committed abomination; yet, they were not at all ashamed, they did not know how to blush."

How can we study peacemaking? How *dare* we claim the kingdom of peace when there is no peace?

Peacekeeping is about identifying with the experiences, loves and aspirations of people whom the gospel commands us to help

I believe the task of peacekeeping and humanitarian operations is as demanding and gut-wrenching today as the challenge that has always faced the people of God. In our world, where values and cultural presumptions of peacekeepers are tested in the white heat of ancient passions of other peoples, the psalmist

continues to speak for us (137:1-4): "By the rivers of Babylon — there we sat down and there we wept ... For there our captors asked us for songs, and our tormentors asked for mirth, saying, 'Sing us one of those songs of Zion!'"

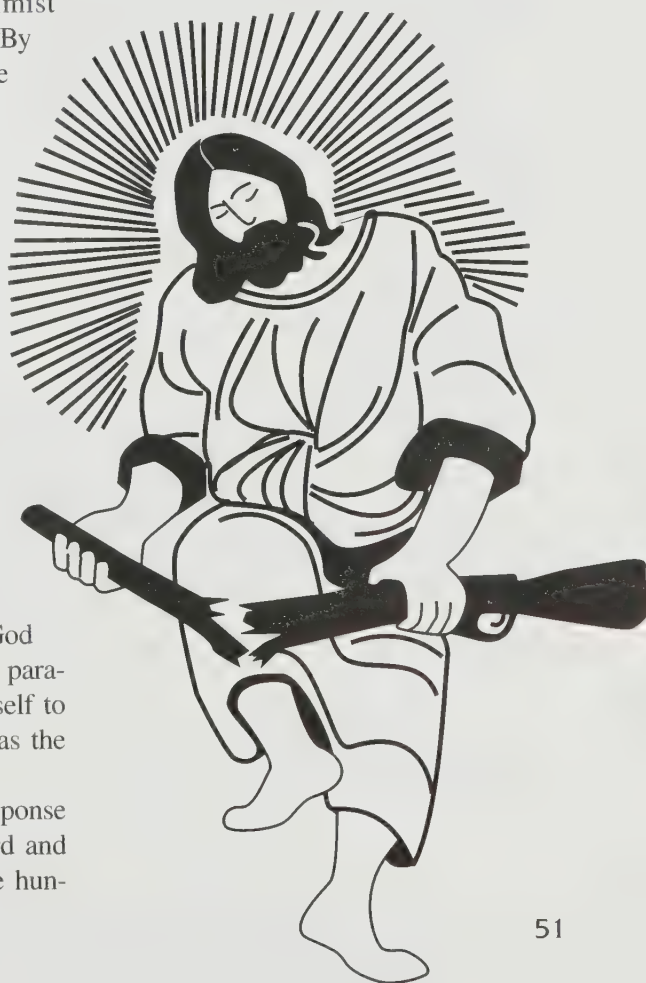
The military peacekeeper — indeed, the Christian — lives and works in a cosmos where combatants mock our efforts, wanting anything but peace. We operate in a world in which God-originated humanity has ceased to be recognizable. This is the "strange land" into which all missionaries of the Kingdom are called. We can be bold to claim this calling because God was not loath to present God's own paradox of salvation. He emptied himself to re-present the Cross of Suffering as the Cross of Victory.

To be agents of the world's response to suffering is to present the Word and translate it into actual food for the hun-

gry, to alleviate the parched, to take in the stranger and to clothe the naked. We prepare ourselves to be witnesses of peace in a world where there is little of it and we are doers of deeds that are designed for those who cannot pay us back.

Peacekeeping or a humanitarian operation is about identifying with the experiences, loves and aspirations of others whom we are commanded by the gospel to help. May this faith in action begin the arrival of the Kingdom of true and lasting peace. **R**

Excerpts from a sermon preached at the Canadian Forces Chaplain School & Centre, CFB Borden, Ontario, to a class of chaplains in a peacekeeping and humanitarian operations course, by Rev. Wayne G. Smith who recently completed a two-year term as reserve training officer at the school.



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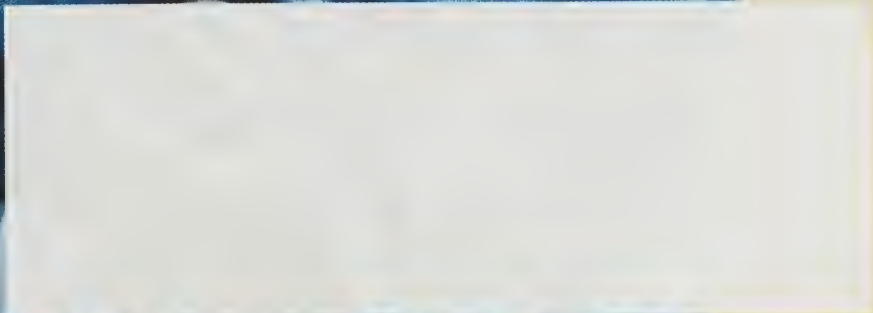
PRESBYTERIAN Record

December 1999



African Virgin
and Child

p.14



True generosity depends not upon the size of the gift, but upon the love of the giver.

— James Simpson

Prayer for Y2K

The Lord is my programmer, I shall not crash.

He installed his software on the hard disk of my heart;

All of his commands are user-friendly.

His directory guides me to the right choices for his name's sake.

Even though I scroll through the problems of life,

I will fear no bugs, for he is my back-up. His password protects me.

He prepares a menu before me in the presence of my enemies.

His help is only a keystroke away.

Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life,

and my file will be merged with his and saved forever. Amen.

Prayer for Joy

Dear Lord, help us to recapture the joy of Christmas — the joy that comes from Christ, is maintained by Christ and is revealed in Christ. Help us so to receive Jesus again into our hearts this Christmas that the joy of his presence will permeate our lives and radiate through us. Thus, let our joy so shine before others that they may glorify you, whose goodwill it is to give this same joy to them. Amen.

— Kenneth L. Hodder
in *The Joyful Newsletter*

God Does Not Play Numerological Games

There will, therefore, always be revivals, whatever the date. A millennium is simply the ticking over of a very round number in the human system of measuring a mystery of another sort, linear time. The hype aside, the year 2000 has no magical significance. The only people who, by logic, should be looking for cosmic import in the date are Christians since it is counted from the birth of Jesus. Scripture scholars, however, squaring events and people in the Gospels with ancient Roman and other records, have concluded that our present calendar is off by two to eight years. The mostly likely date for the birth of Christ is 7 BC. For Christians, the year 2000 will be a jubilee, a moment for reflective rededication, but the real millennium has already happened. For everyone else, that date is, or should be, irrelevant. We can all relax; God does not play numerological games with human history.

— Suzanne Scorsone



Do It Now

Some of us think, "If I had only been there. How quick I would have been to help the baby. I would have washed his linen. How happy I would have been to go with the shepherds to see the Lord lying in the manger." We say that because we know how great Christ is, but if we had been there at that time, we would have done no better than the people of Bethlehem. Why don't we do it now? We have Christ in our neighbour.

— Martin Luther

Wrong Beliefs

There is a deeper sense of the word "Christian" in which some who hold wrong beliefs may be more Christian than some who hold the right ones.

— C. S. Lewis

Growing Congregations

The numerically growing congregations and denominations of the 21st century will not be those that excel in reaching people born before 1940. The numerically growing religious bodies will be those that are organized around excellence, high expectations, facilitating the pilgrimage of their members from a point of low religious commitment to a high level of Christian commitment, and a vision that challenges people to exceed their own self-imposed limitations.

— Lyle Schaller

The Century Fund

Three of the congregations in Toronto are aiming at \$25,000 each for the Century Fund.

Only 1029 of the Sabbath Schools have as yet responded with Children's Day offerings for the Century Fund. Where are the 1409? ...

Subscriptions to the Fund have thus far ranged from the one dollar of a seven year old who is going to save his cents, to the five thousand of the men who have already saved their cents. There is room between and beyond the above for multitudes ...

In the Maritime Synod there have been touching instances of loving giving to the Fund, in memoriam, as the departed "would have done if living" — and a mistress of the manse on her dying bed, but a few hours before her translation, made a gift — her last gift — to the Fund.

— *The Presbyterian Record*, December 1899



Advent Came Early

At a recent appointment, Rev. Chris Vais told his doctor a joke. "What's the difference between a doctor and God?" he asked. Answer: "God doesn't think he is a doctor."

Not the normal way most of us would begin a visit to our physician. But there are many things not "normal" about Chris Vais, including his undiminished sense of humour.

Chris was diagnosed with ALS (amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, commonly known as Lou Gehrig's disease) on January 13, 1997. When Chris felt he could no longer carry out his ministry at Knox Church in Waterdown, Ontario, the normal thing might have been to withdraw into self-pity and anger. Instead, he looked for a new ministry. He found it in the birth of *For Words*, a newsletter he writes and sends out four times a year.

Many of us received a taste of Chris's new ministry when we gathered at Knox College on October 20 for the annual MacDonald Lecture. The college had invited him to give this lecture which is devoted to the practice of ministry. Chris divided his presentation into two parts. The first, read by Brian Stuart of the CBC, reflected on life with ALS and how, despite its ravages, Chris has been able to discover a new ministry and hope. Look for it in this magazine early in the new year.

The second half of his lecture, read by his close friend Andrew Fullerton, centred on what Chris called the six basics of ministry: the Bible, prayer, offering a cup of cold water, sharing our faith, anointing with oil and prayers for healing, and the Eucharist.

At the conclusion of the lecture, Rev. Charlotte Stuart spoke for us all: "Chris, many of us spend our lives sowing seeds and do not see the fruits of our labours this side of heaven. I want to assure you that, already, through your *For Words* ministry, you have encouraged and helped countless numbers of people like myself to continue our ministries. By courageously sharing with us your feelings and experiences since your diagnosis, you have helped each of us to be better ministers to those with whom we come in contact."

Following the lecture, the group moved into the chapel where a service of Communion and healing was held under the leadership of Stanley Walters.

Words cannot adequately express the warmth and encouragement all of us felt as we trooped out into the dull fall day.

When Chris was first diagnosed with this disease, he said he was determined to discover a new ministry. Proof that has happened lay in the blessing we all felt.

Meanwhile, Chris told us, he is seriously considering a Y2K project for himself: memorizing the Psalms in the year 2000. His generation, he pointed out, "is more likely to be able to sing *The Brady Bunch* theme song or the theme song from

Gilligan's Island (both endings)" than recite portions of the Bible.

When he is no longer able to move or must be confined to bed for long periods, he would prefer, he said, to have his mind and heart filled with the word of God than with advertising jingles.

You can be a part of Chris's ministry. A subscription to *For Words* is \$10 per year. This, plus

any donations, may be sent to Chris at RR 3, Bracebridge, Ontario P1L 1X1. Make your cheque payable to: St. David's Presbyterian Church — For Words. E-mail: forwords@vianet.on.ca.

**"God chose
what is weak
in the world
to shame the
strong"**

— Saint Paul

With this issue, two longtime contributors leave the magazine — a monthly columnist and a cartoonist. Noel Watson's cartoons have graced the pages of this magazine for more than 20 years. Few church magazines have had a cartoonist with such professional skills willing to share so generously. We hope he will continue to be an occasional contributor.

Kathy Cawsey has stimulated the thoughts of our readers as few columnists have. She became a regular columnist with the magazine after serving as a summer student from Wilfrid Laurier University in 1995. Watch for her byline in future issues as she continues to cover stories and write articles for the magazine.

John Congram

Volume CXXIII, No. 11
December 1999
ISSN 0032-7573

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Published on the first of each month except
August by The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

The *Presbyterian Record*, national magazine of
The Presbyterian Church in Canada, is respon-
sible to the General Assembly. It exists to publish
issues relative to Christian faith and a selection of
current and timely news analyses and opinions of
interest or importance to Presbyterians across
Canada.

Member of The Canadian Church Press and
The Associated Church Press.

Publications Mail Registration No. 09634
Postage paid at Mississauga, Ontario.
Return postage guaranteed.
Send label only.

Subscription Rates

Individual: \$15

Every Home Plan (80% families subscribe): \$9

Club 50 Plan (50% families subscribe): \$11

U.S.A. and Foreign: \$20

Single Copies: \$2

All prices include GST.

Acceptance of advertising does not imply
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The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

Address all correspondence and changes of
address (include label from magazine) to:

Presbyterian Record
50 Wynford Drive
Toronto, Ontario M3C 1J7
Phone: (416) 441-1111
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E-mail: pcrecord@presbyterian.ca

Web site: www.presbycan.ca/record

FROM THE MODERATOR

Arthur
Van Seters



A Crisis That Calls for Advent Attention

In front of first one farm and then another, I noticed the For Sale signs on vehicles: a half-ton pickup, a car, then both a truck and a car. I was driving from Brandon, Manitoba, to Weyburn, Saskatchewan. Along Highway 2, someone with a wry sense of humour set up a puppet "fishing" off the land. Another had an outboard pulling a water skier (at first glance, the latter looked a bit like someone plowing)! The truth is that the rains that saturated southern Manitoba and Saskatchewan last fall and again this past spring have left farmers devastated.

A thousand farm families could leave the land that has been their whole life

At First Church in Brandon, I spent the better part of a morning listening to the crisis that is building on the Prairies. Farm organizations like Keystone Agricultural Products describe the situation as equivalent to the Manitoba flood of two years ago and the ice storm in Eastern Ontario and Quebec. But there has not been a fraction of the response to this emergency as there was to the other two. The reason? It's not dramatic. It's not on television, I was told.

A couple of weeks ago, a Toronto newspaper asked a similar question about the AIDS epidemic in Africa that is costing the lives of millions. It, too, is a slow, drawn out process that hasn't caught the eye of media cameras. It is also on a continent that, unfortunately, has seldom commanded North American attention.

But this is right here in Canada. The climatic conditions of four years of rain in 14 months have meant that more than a million acres were not even seeded and most of those that were seeded produced a low yield in the worst-hit regions. The math is \$176 million lost directly by farmers and four or five times that amount by the community in lost sales for equipment, seed, etc., and basic necessities for living. And these are estimates for Manitoba alone.

The farmers explained some of the deeper issues further. Eighty per cent of Canadian grain is sold abroad, and Canada is competing against the United States and Europe. In Canadian currency equivalencies, the U.S. subsidy to farmers is more than \$120 per acre, the European subsidy is \$318, while the Canadian subsidy is a mere \$15 per acre. So while the cost of seed, fertilizer, spraying and farm machinery increases radically, the price of even a Grade A crop is pitiful. Is this the price of "globalizing" agriculture?

The farmers who spoke to me believe the various safety nets of crop insurance, stabilization programs and even the Agriculture Income Disaster Assistance program will not prevent at least 30 per cent of farmers from declaring bankruptcy. A thousand farm families could give up and leave. But tilling the land is their whole life, so the future looks bleak. The pressure on farm families is incredible.

As pastor at First Church, Brandon, Dale Woods asked what the church-at-large can do to help. Could churches band together to provide support for farm families as well as for the surrounding communities that are drawn into the vortex of this crisis? Economic pressures and depression deepened by circumstances beyond individual

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Our Cover

African Virgin. All rights reserved VIE DE JESUS MAFA, 24 rue du Maréchal Joffre, F-78000 VERSAILLES. From a collection of paintings on the life of Jesus by artists in Cameroon, West Africa.

In the next issue ...

- "Who is Jesus?" In search of the historical Jesus
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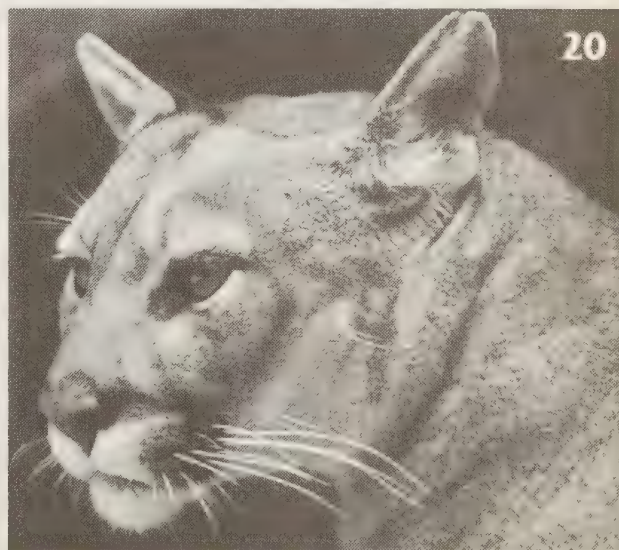
28 Nurturing Passion for Jesus

G. John Baergen

Congregations that live their faith with contagious enthusiasm grow in both quality and quantity



14



20

No Magic Wand

I am amused at the beautiful naïvety of Robert King (Letters, Oct. *Record*) and others that promote the forgiveness of debt simply because a disputed calendar page is about to be turned. Such is the start of such Jubilee nonsense. Modern monetary policy, existent social programs and basic economics should dictate a realism and rationale that King should investigate. Who shall deem what group is oppressed and in bondage? Are they the homeless in our streets or natives in a Third World country? Who or by what mechanism shall these outstanding billions of dollars be absorbed? Will it be increased lending rates, higher taxes, the crashing of stock-markets?

Rather than Jubilee followers seeking the impossible, perhaps their energies should be directed to encouraging education, industry and technology. There is no magic wand (nor should there be) to wave to eradicate debt — only hard work and accepting responsibility. You will find those references in the Bible, too.

Richard C. Ludwig,
Calgary

Debt Cancellation for Canada's Poor

I have followed with interest the letters in the *Record* on the issue of forgiveness of debts as a means of celebrating the Year of Jubilee. While I think it is a fine gesture to consider forgiving these debts, I find I cannot reconcile the fact that The Presbyterian Church in Canada gets all excited over the debt problems of Third World countries but takes no stand on issues of poverty in our own country, particularly in Ontario. In the past four years, there has been a deliberate creation of poverty in this province, and the church has done little to address it.

I struggle with the notion that impoverished people in Canada have been made a scapegoat of society, blamed in large part for the creation of government debt. Sadly, they are not even deemed worthy of being championed by an organization long charged with the responsibility for looking after widows and children. When can they expect the cancellation of their debts?

Wanda Thompson,
Guelph, Ont.

Right On!

It is great to see Kathy Cawsey in the *Record*. She's a breath of fresh air. How someone so young can have so much insight completely boggles my mind. Once more, she was right on ("Terror Transformed," Oct. *Record*).

Jack Boan,
Regina

Shorter letters are more likely to be published and less likely to be edited

Wrongful Dismissal Suit

I realize the *Record* prints articles and letters at times that express viewpoints promoting both thought and con-

troversy. In my 30 years of ministry, I have never written to the *Record* to express my views on any subject. However, I am writing today to take strong exception to a news item in the October issue regarding the conclusion of a suit launched by Rev. Malcolm Muth against the Presbytery of Kingston for wrongful dismissal in 1993.

I am a friend of the Muth family and, since they worship with us, also their minister. I wish to object to the "tabloid style" of journalism of that item in publishing hurtful material and, also, by

WATSON'S WORLD

Noel Watson



taking quotations out of context so as to make them virtually untrue.

The day the suit ended was Marie's birthday. After six years of litigation, the presbytery decided to settle — not out of the goodness of their hearts but because they had, in effect, lost the case and were in danger of a major finding against them that could have totalled up to two million dollars. When asked by the judge what he would settle for, Malcolm Muth made it clear that all he wanted was vindication and "costs." He got both. He said he never wanted the church's money and he had no wish to profit personally from it. His legal costs and expenses were \$125,000.

The *Record* leaves the impression that Marie was given \$125,000 for her birthday. The quote from Malcolm Muth was correct. He is the master of the one-liner. What he gave Marie was, in effect, nothing monetary, but peace — the conclusion of this horrible experience. Had the *Record* chosen to familiarize itself with the facts of this case, such an erroneous impression would not have been left. You have hurt and publicly embarrassed one of the most decent and giving women in our denomination.

The other point, which is newsworthy and, probably, is the most important to come out of this case, you missed entirely: courts of our church are liable for suit! If we do not follow the rules of Canon Law, we should expect to be drawn into civil litigation. Malcolm Muth was not divisive; the Presbytery of Kingston was. Malcolm Muth went to the civil court not by choice but because the presbytery denied him the right of appeal to the church courts. This could have and should have been settled in the church.

We in the church had better take notice. We are liable for suit. As Mr. Justice Byers said, "If you do an injustice, you have to pay." We cannot hide behind "We are the Church." There is a lot to learn from this case if we will learn its lessons.

I admire Marie, Malcolm and their family and number them among my friends. They have been terribly hurt,

falsely accused and publicly maligned. For that, I am terribly sorry. I hope they hold their heads up high. Others involved in this should hang theirs in shame!

John Cruickshank,
Simcoe, Ont.

Editor's note: The news item was composed from a news release sent to the Record by Malcolm Muth's lawyers and from a statement sent by the clerk of the Presbytery of Kingston. The Record believes the news item accurately and fairly reflected those two documents.

Evolution

John Tors should re-examine his comments (Letters, Sept. *Record*). It is not realistic to state evolution is impossible when one can examine the evidence of God's continuing creation everywhere over, at least, the past 500 million years — from the Precambrian era to the present day. This is particularly true in Alberta where the successive layers of sedimentary rock have been stood on edge for us to see in the Rocky Mountains. Much of the geological calendar can be examined.

My first introduction to God's methods in creation occurred when I stood on Mount Stephen, a few thousand feet above Kicking Horse River, and studied the 600-foot layer of Burgess shale with its trilobite fossils. I was awed to understand the majesty and drama of God's creation. While scientists may have difficulty with the "tenets of evolution," some 30,000 feet of stratified sedimentary rock under the Alberta prairies attest to a staged creation over a protracted period of time. Darwin called it "survival of the fittest"; Stephen Gould, studying the Burgess shale, coined the term "survival by lottery." I prefer to think of it as "evolution by prescription."

To say evolution is impossible is a lost cause. The best we can hope for is that *people* will refrain from prescribing evolutionary adventures and leave the task of continued creation to God.

J. Harvey Freeman,
Devon, Alberta

Ronald

has been a friend of the Hall for most of his adult life. Although most of my contact with him was casual — a cup of coffee, help with new ID and the like — over time, we came to know each other well. Three years ago, our relationship took a dramatic turn. One wintry morning, I found him lying sideways in the slush outside the Hall. His last handful of dollars was on the ground, partially protected by his fallen body. He was still alive — truly a miracle. In his desperation, and in his pitiful, semi-conscious state, he had managed to find his way to those he trusted. Ronald had found his way to the Hall. Our friendship continues.

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Invocation

Your excellent October editorial, "Zeroing in on the Millennium," suggesting diversion of emergency rations to refugee organizations, reminded me of a short verse I wrote for our Oak Bay Rotary Club:

Dear Lord, while we learn
The lessons of labour,
May we share your concern
For the needs of our neighbour. Amen.
*Walter T. McConville,
Victoria*

Fond Memories

The article by Joseph C. McLelland ("Postscript: Women ... and Mission?" Sept. *Record*) brought back many fond memories to my three siblings and me, the surviving members of the family of Rev. Donald MacLeod. For more than 10 years, he ministered in the Val d'Or and Perron area as a missionary, together with various angels from the "Angel Factory" [Ewart College]. Lily Macarthur, first on the scene, was instrumental in organizing many aspects of the church like the Sunday school and summer camps. She was a great help to Dad during the early days, which could not be termed easy. We know, because we were there.

There were, of course, other angels like Muriel Judd who followed. After Dad accepted a call to St. James Church in Thamesville, Ontario, in December 1945, she carried on alone and was a force in making Dad's dream come true: two permanent church buildings were officially opened and dedicated to the glory of God by Dad in 1948.

Thank you for bringing back many fond memories of our father and the many angels. It is comforting to know his efforts of some 50 years ago are still being recognized today.

*Keith MacLeod,
Kincardine, Ont.*

More Stories

The General Assembly's Sexual Orientation Committee is grateful to everyone who sent in stories of personal experiences as a homosexual or heterosexual (or family members) in the church. If

you still have a story to tell, we'd still be pleased to receive it. (We assure confidentiality.) The committee continues to work hard on this complex issue and we ask for your prayers. We are also hoping to hear what congregations have done to make their church a welcoming place for all worshippers, including homosexuals. Please write to us at: patrpatn@mnsi.net or Wendy Paterson, 3200 Woodland Ave., Windsor, Ont. N9E 1Z5.

*Wendy Paterson,
Windsor, Ont.*

Alarmingly Typical

Sarah Anderson's "Not Clear to Everyone" (Letters, Sept. *Record*) is becoming alarmingly typical of some who call themselves Christians. Paul's letter to the church in Rome is clear about the consequences of a homosexual lifestyle. Some try to interpret biblical passages in order to justify a sinful lifestyle and, therein, lies another sin. Yes, we should pray for those who break God's laws. We should also pray for those who would have us accept that a committed, loving homosexual lifestyle is OK, when it is clearly not.

*Harvey Edwards,
Thornbury, Ont.*

Latin Forever

I am sorry to hear General Assembly has decreed Latin terms are going to be done away with in The Presbyterian Church in Canada. I always thought their use dignified our denomination.

Latin hearkens back to our heritage and its foundation in languages unfamiliar to most people today: Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. For this reason, to become a Minister of Word and Sacraments requires the study of one of the biblical tongues. While I'm completely incompetent with regard to languages other than English — and some would include English as well — the practice did me no harm and, probably, a lot of good. Certainly, my New Testament professor Raymond Humphries made me work harder than any other seminary teacher on account of Greek. While I didn't appreciate it at the time, I now rise up and call him blessed.

In this bilingual country, the use of Latin does not require translation but can stand alone on its own merits. Surely, that is the reason our Presbyterian motto is in Latin and should, I pray, forever remain so. Heaven help us to have it in both English and French.

Latin is the foundation on which English rests. To take it away from us robs us of our living heritage.

*Rod Lamb,
Petawawa, Ont.*

Ode to the Governor General

Why do Governors General marry in such haste?
Is this too good an opportunity to waste?
Is a common law arrangement for a "regal"
Neither suitable nor legal?
Or is our fearless prime minister scared of the religious right,
Exhorting marriage to avoid a fight?
Or did John Ralston Saul
Convert on the road to Rideau Hall?
The PM's message seems to be:
(Excluding "ordinary" Canadians like you or me)
"If you want a big political favour,
Stop the legal battle with your neighbour.
And if you want Canada's top spot,
You had better tie the marriage knot."

*James Roberts,
Kingston, Ont.*

That Aging Treble Clef

Robert P. Langlois

We all love to sing the melody. I don't know anyone who hums the bass part of "Amazing Grace" or "Jingle Bells." So I've always wondered why church hymn-books include all four-harmony parts in the congregation's music. The choir needs this guide, but middle-aged males have trouble even hitting the range offered by the bass part.

Sing heartily ye youngsters

for tomorrow thy voices will waver and crack

After many years, my high C voice has been slipping a note each year and, some mornings, is barely capable of a sustained lower G. I love to sing vigorously and loudly but have lately gone quite mute. This came about one Sunday

morning when, during the singing of Beethoven's "Joyful, Joyful: Hymn to Joy," my voice developed a longing to experiment and departed to a note I had never heard before. Neither had my neighbours. I was humbled. I sadly realized my days of belting forth the melody were gone. I experimented with humming along in bass harmony but failed at sight-reading and couldn't catch the right piano accompaniment. I tried singing along a full octave lower but this felt incredibly dumb. My enthusiasm for vocal music was in a crash-and-burn dive.

Did others share my problem? Time to do a survey. At first, it was surreptitious. A quick glance here, a sideways look there. Check on each male to see who is merely mumbling. Then engage each in conversation. Do you sing? Do you prefer to sing the melody? Can you sight-read? And so on and so forth.

Do the four tenors have this aging problem? My tenor brother David, who sings in a number of amateur productions, still has a strong voice, but his 20-year-old son, Richard, has a strength that is starting to dominate their duets.

There's one solution to this high-note-out-of-range stuff. Transposition. Transposition is the shifting of all the notes up or down. Some pianists can do this on the fly but don't ask me how; I have trouble following the notes as printed. Amazingly, some new electronic keyboards can automatically transpose the music as the printed score is played. Two notes too high? No problem. Tap the pitch key and the notes come out the right amount lower or higher. My piano teacher, Joanne, has one of these keyboards. It weighs about 20 kilograms, less than 1/20th of a



regular upright piano. It's totally portable. It transposes. It records. It counts. It even does Windows. Play some music as printed, pitch it low using the transposer key, hook up to a computer and, tah-dah, the transposed music is printed out. Now, any sight-reading pianist can play the newly minted music.

The technique is not without discord. As my colleague Sterling confided, "This is something many people have thought about but never discuss in polite company." The Presbyterian *Book of Praise* warns that "many tunes lose much of their character when transposed."

I phoned my elder sister Christine (a minister's spouse) in Vancouver to get a soprano's take on this (don't you love those new unlimited talk-all-you-want rates?). "Transposition wouldn't work," she protested. "The brilliance of the music is lost. And some sopranos couldn't sing that low." I suggested that, well, maybe, they could sing harmony, give up the melody and sight-read.

"NEVER," she countered. "Never would they ever give up the melody. Sopranos own the melody. Besides, they're terrible sight-readers."

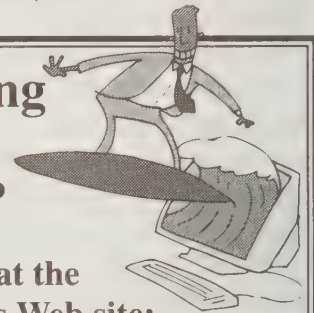
Aahhh. The truth comes out. Soprano chauvinism. Immediately, I sensed a weakness in my elder sister's arguments. Unable to resist temptation, I asked her what she would rather have: a church with many middle-aged males singing heartily (inclusiveness) or only the sopranos and a few lucky tenors (exclusiveness)?

Sopranos really do have a sense of humour. Christine told me to wear a bottle of helium and take the occasional sniff to raise my voice pitch. Other sopranos have warned me not to push this too far or I may find myself on a soprano hit list. They have friends in high places. I might even get pepper sprayed or choked on my vocal cords. One of them recommended a surgeon who would do an operation ... no, not *that* one. She meant shorten the vocal cords to make them resonate at a higher frequency.

Christmas is almost here. I look forward, once again, to belting out those carols in the company of several hundred other churchgoers or walking around our little village one cold crisp night, carolling with a few other like-minded souls. Then, we'll retire to the kitchen, pour a cup of hot mulled wine and thank God for the joy of singing. **R**

Robert Langlois teaches electrical engineering technology at Fanshawe College and is married to Rev. Gloria Langlois of Knox Church, Belmont, and St. James Church, Central Yarmouth, Ont.

Surfing the Web?



Stop in at the
Record's Web site:
www.presbycan.ca/record

Associate Minister Knox Church – Oakville, Ontario, Canada

In conjunction with the existing ministry team, this position will ensure that the principles of Knox's "permission giving" Vision 2000 are pursued. We believe that the Spirit is alive at Knox and that we now need new input to our ministry in growth, leadership and faith functions.

Knox Church is situated in downtown Oakville, Ontario, Canada. The congregation was established in 1833 and holds a vibrant place in its community. Our membership lists 600 families.

If you thrive in engaging your gifts and talents and those of your congregation for the Lord's work, please contact us.

Ann Herten (Search Team Chair)
Knox Presbyterian Church
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am.herten@sympatico.ca

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For information on how to form a team of volunteers and fashion Christian community in a Boarding Home or to assist this ministry financially, please contact:

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Toronto, Ontario M4T 2N5
(416) 992-4987; kerr.hunter@sympatico.ca



Acting Like God

John 1:1-18

When the comic writer, actor, director Woody Allen was accused of acting like God, he is reported to have replied: "You have to model yourself after someone. Why not God?"

Right, Woody. People model themselves after someone. People were once encouraged to model themselves after the saints, but that is rather passé. Instead of stories of the giving lives of the saints, stories are told of the getting lives of the latest star of screen or stage or sports or politics.

Despite the secularization and excesses of Christmas, the Christ of Christmas still manages to assert there is a different way. In the midst of mad materialistic consumption is the persistent reminder that there came to the human scene someone who acted like God. This "Word made flesh" began at the very heart of God. The opening of the Gospel of John proclaims Jesus was with God from the very beginning, brought life into being, is the true light shining and bestows the gift of adoption on those who believe. Different from the Synoptic Gospels, John's Gospel is not properly seen in isolation but as the culmination and completion of the Gospel records.

If the opening of John's Gospel said only that God became human in form, we might model ourselves after a god of power and "lord it over others"; but the passage illustrates the nature of this acting like God. T. E. Lawrence, better known as Lawrence of Arabia, wrote that the Arabs would follow no leader unless he identified with them in eating

their food, wearing their clothes and living as they lived, yet, was better in himself. Sound familiar? How about "one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). Jesus identified with our frailty and folly, hopes and fears, leading us

to loving and serving that we might be more "God-like."

In Jesus, human form is the carrier of the love of God. Human flesh is the instrument of the purpose of God. Human nature is the image of the compassion of God. As the Apostle Paul wrote,

in Jesus shone "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God." He was "the human face of God." In Jesus, God took on a human dimension so that we might know our worth and value. Jesus is the language of the love of God. He became a human that we might be more like God. In the stirring words of Phillips Brooks, "Jesus Christ, the condescension of divinity, and the exaltation of humanity."

The Word became flesh and dwelt among us. God's Word came to us in human shape and form, calling us to embody that Word in our own lives. When a child is cherished and nurtured, when a young woman is rescued from the despair of the streets, when a young man is saved from the belief that he has no future, when someone is encouraged to know that human worth does not depend on financial or material success, when a woman is encouraged to feel good about the full equality and high potential of her womanhood, when old men and women are loved to the end of lives that are sometimes wearisome and sometimes

burdensome — the Word has again become flesh.

When depression is treated because someone cares, when suicide is prevented because someone cares, when a door is opened because someone cares — the Word has become flesh once again. When the hungry are fed, when the prisoners are visited, when the poor are assisted, when the oppressed are set free — the Word has become flesh.

When initiatives toward peace are taken, when prejudice is overcome — the Word has become flesh. When we abandon complacency and begin to seek real economic and social and racial justice, when we drop self-righteousness and begin to care truly for those for whom we have felt only contempt — the Word has become flesh in us. And whenever it can be said of us, in the words of the hymn, that "they'll know we are Christians by our love" — the Word will have become flesh indeed. **R**

For Discussion and Reflection

- No commentary is as effective as reading John 1:1-18 in a variety of translations. Try it.
- What is usually meant by "to act like God"? What did it mean in the life of Jesus and what does it mean to you?
- Would our understanding of God be different if Jesus had been born into wealth or of high rank or with political power?
- Compare the "beginnings of Jesus" in the four Gospels.

L. E. (Ted) Siverns is the minister of First Church in New Westminster, B.C.



Making It Personal

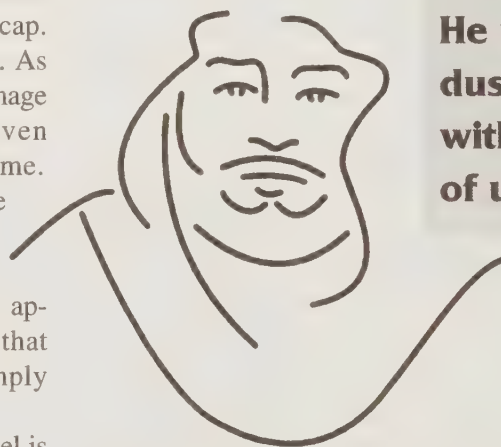
If you're as old as I am, you may remember a time when A&W was a drive-in chain. Waitresses in skimpy skirts brought orders out on little trays that hooked onto car windows. French fries steamed up the windshield while you feasted.

You may also remember when Colonel Sanders promoted Kentucky Fried Chicken himself. With his white suit, his so'th'n drawl, his walking stick and goatee, he looked as if he had stepped out of *Gone With the Wind*. But the chain of chicken outlets he founded must have considered him a handicap. He was old-fashioned, out-of-date ... As soon as he died, they dumped his image from their advertising. They even dropped "Kentucky" from the name. They must have figured the name branded their customers as hayseeds from the hills. Perhaps they thought they'd have more universal appeal with a bland corporate logo that didn't relate to any region — simply plain KFC.

But have you noticed? The Colonel is back. Not in person, of course. The privilege of physical resurrection is limited to Jesus. But the Colonel has been resurrected as an animated personality. He joins all those others who personalize their fast-food chains: Ronald McDonald, Dave Thomas and the A&W Root Bear.

Advertising is finally discovering something politics and religion have known for years: humans have difficulty relating to corporate entities. We relate to other humans like ourselves. So political parties are identified with their leaders, for good or for ill. For years, the Liberals were Trudeau and the Conservatives were Mulroney. Provincial governments are Mike Harris or Ralph Klein or Lucien Bouchard.

In the same way, each religion has someone who embodies its central message: Muhammad for Islam, Baha'ullah for Baha'i, Krishna for Hinduism. Even Buddhism — that claims there is no God "out there" to worship — has elevated its founder, Siddhartha Gautama, into the Buddha, the personification of the Godhead whose figure now adorns almost every temple. Tibetan Buddhism treats the present Dalai Lama as the



14th human incarnation of the Buddha.

For Christians, of course, Jesus is the unique embodiment of God. The nativity stories themselves may not be the kind of facts accepted by law courts — after all, there were no reporters and TV cameras around to record the events as they happened — but they proclaim an underlying truth. God got tired of being just an idea. For some 3,000 years, God had tried to show "the chosen people," through the patriarchs and the prophets, what God was like. And, as a consequence, what God wanted them to be like. And they didn't get it. Couldn't get it. Because they couldn't relate to an abstract concept.

Once, in a congregational exercise, we were asked to draw our first idea of

what God looks like. Almost everyone drew an old man with a long beard. One or two rebels drew a woman. The man sitting next to me whispered, "A generation from now, we won't be able to do this exercise. By the time we get rid of all the personal language, this generation won't have *any* picture of God in their minds." It's hard to have a personal relationship with what one wag called "an oblong blur."

So God decided to show instead of tell. Instead of depending on prophets and other interpreters, God chose to reveal God's real nature as one of us. That's the event we celebrate at

Christmas. The tinsel, the trees, the tinkle of cash registers are all by-products. The main event is God's decision to be revealed in what we call "The Incarnation." To become one of us. In every way. Including starting off as that most helpless of creatures — a newborn human baby.

Jesus did not issue edicts from a distant mountaintop. He walked the dusty valleys with the rest of us.

Jesus was not spared the ultimate human reality. He died, as we all must. He died alone, in pain, as many of us do. He died a victim of unjust systems as vast numbers still do all around the world.

Only in his resurrection from death did Jesus differ from us — and even that, we are assured, will also be ours eventually.

God became a personal encounter so we could know God with our hearts as well as with our heads. **R**

**God did not
issue edicts
from a distant
mountaintop.
He walked the
dusty valleys
with the rest
of us**

Jim Taylor is a writer, editor and co-founder of Wood Lake Books.

My dear editor:

Much has been made of the Yuletide folksong "The Twelve Days of Christmas," not only as an endurance test but also as an indicator of our economic well-being. Though there may not be time or space *this* year — given a broader agenda — some media person, left alone in a holiday-depleted newsroom and looking for filler of the on-air or print variety, will find the time to ascertain and total the present-day cost of "a partridge in a pear tree," "two turtles doves," etc. and *ad nauseam*. Then, for our further reflection, he or she will make the cost comparison with last year, 10 years ago, etc. and *ad nauseam*.

Now, I know many of your readers are not, nor will they ever be, in the market for gifts of such bizarre singularity (there are few entries for "lords a-leaping" even in the *Yellow Pages*); but I am sure, with a little effort, they can come up with presents for the proudly Presbyterian that are both indicators of our well-being (economic and otherwise) and sure to garner that welcome response, "Now isn't that *special*!"

Such as?... I'm glad you asked.

For the pulpit prince or princess in your life, from the X-Clessia Corp., the "Cool Collar" — a washable clerical collar with a difference! Designed for preaching (and, perhaps, annual congregational meetings), this collar contains an inner compartment filled with the same gel used in sinus and headache masks. Stored in the refrigerator for a few hours before using, it keeps the modern cleric cool and comfortable no matter how excited he or she becomes about the nefarious behaviour of the Hit-tites. After 60-75 minutes, it begins to sag, reminding the preacher the congregation has too. (\$12.50 basic white, add \$2 for ecru or ivory)

Have you ever wanted to do your bit for the fall bazaar or rummage sale but lacked the craftiness to make beautiful

whatnots or the cooking skills to create colourful (or even edible) relishes? Have you long since donated all your old fondue sets or portraits of past Moderators painted on black velvet? What's left? Books, of course. But do you really want to donate your collection of Grade 10 textbooks, Danielle Steel romances and *Where's Waldo?* mysteries? Even if you haven't stuck "Ex-libris" stickers in them, someone "arty" is sure to notice. What to do?

Well, worry no more! Pious and Perishable Publishers Warehouse has assembled a collection of worthy remaindered volumes, including titles such as *Name Tags and the Book of Numbers*, *The Song of Solomon Made Safe for Sabbath School Scholars — A New Translation*, *The Apocalypse — Are You Sure It Hasn't Happened?*, *Prayers for the Prissy*, *The History of Commemorative Church Plates* and many, many more. Buy now and never be ashamed to donate to a sale again! (\$7.99 a linear foot. Add \$5 per foot for cracking the spines, dog-eared the pages and making the books look as if they've been read)

These same good people also offer pre-distressed copies of the Holy Scriptures for people who don't mind going to Bible study groups as long as they actually don't have to read the Bible. A variety of translations — from the *King James Version* to the *Cool News, Dude!* version of the New Testament, complete with pierced cover — come with underlinings in *ink* and marginal notes such as "How apt!" and "But is this true to the Greek?" Whatever your choice, it will provide the coveted aura of devoted scholarship. (Prices vary, available if you insist)

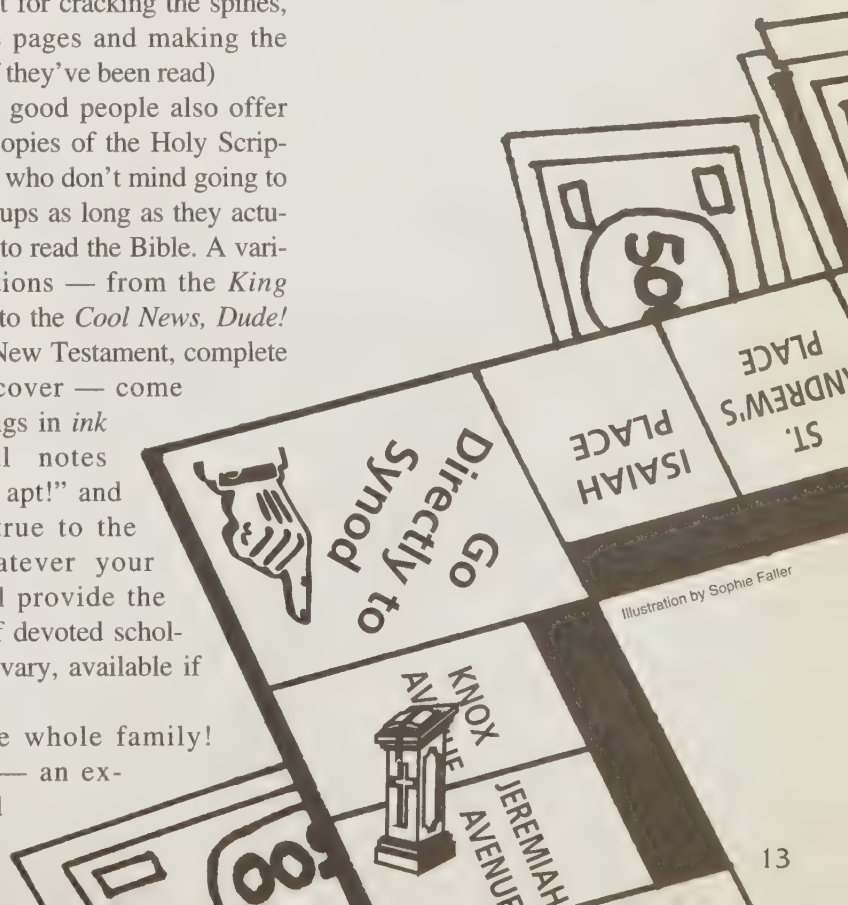
Fun for the whole family! Presbyopoly — an exciting board

game like another board game our lawyers won't let us mention ... but more Christian. Build well-endowed cathedrals on Isaiah Place or Jeremiah Avenue. Or collect your "crown of life" and win by accumulating a number of extension charges on Hosea Hostel or Habakkuk Haven. Thrill to getting a "Get Out of a Meeting Free" card! Groan if it reads "Go Directly to Synod. Do Not Stay Long Enough. Do Not Collect Your Travel Allowance." Choose your markers from a pulpit, casserole, font and plastic potted plant. (Only \$29.95, from Edifying Entertainments — possibly less if Parker Brothers wins)

Since Christmas falls on Saturday this year, it's going to be an especially busy time of it, ecclesiastically speaking. I hope I have been of some help, dear Editor. It's amazing what's out there these days.

Yours suggestively,

Peter Plymley II





"God became man and dwelt among us.
In silence we ponder,
in awe we confess
this amazing truth"

— *Living Faith*

Truly God / Truly Human:

It is two years since Bill Phipps, Moderator of The United Church of Canada, stated, "I don't believe Jesus was God." This made national headlines and caused a stir in the usually placid waters of Canadian Christendom. Not often does Jesus make the news at the end of the second millennium, nor does the interest of the secular media turn on the issues of Christian doctrine. The aftershock produced vigorous discussion and preaching within the Church on the question, "What *do* we believe about Jesus?" From those outside the Church, it prompted different questions: "Why are these Christians getting so upset? Why isn't the man entitled to his own opinion?" Bill Phipps's remark, even if it was not the most edifying moment of his leadership in the United Church, certainly got us talking.

What many of us reacted to was his denial of the traditional, ecumenical understanding of Jesus as fully God and fully human. That understanding is so firmly lodged in our tradition and in our guts that we sing it without batting an eye: "Veiled in flesh the Godhead see! Hail the Incarnate Deity! Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel." Yet, such an affirmation was once as risqué as Phipps's inflammatory statement. If the Church clings determinedly to its traditional understanding, perhaps it is because no modern challenge is more persuasive or original than those already levelled in the first five centuries. Questions about Jesus have exercised and agonized the Church for a long time.

First, what account could be given of the person we meet in the Gospels? He is one who has the power and authority

of God in healing and prophecy, forgiveness of sins and ability to raise the dead; yet, he is also a regular man, subject to the limits of time and space and to emotion, temptation, pain and death.

Secondly, what account could be given of the relation between Jesus and the Trinitarian God revealed in the rest of Scripture? Jesus prays to God as "Father" and he commends the Spirit to his disciples as "another" Comforter. He also has a relationship to that Eternal Word who "was with God" in the beginning and who is reigning, even now, at God's right hand.

Thirdly, what account of Jesus would make sense of the salvation he offers through his death and resurrection? He couldn't be truly God (could he?), for he really died; and he couldn't be altogether human (could he?), for he was able to overturn God's ancient curse: "You shall surely die."

The true humanity of Jesus was disputed as early as the first letter of John (c. AD 90), where the "true spirits" are distinguished from the "false prophets" by their confession that "Jesus Christ has come in the flesh" (I John 4:2-3). On the other hand, Christ's true divinity was questioned by another early sect, the Ebionites (originating c. AD 135). These were Jews whose monotheism would not allow them to credit Jesus' identity with God from the beginning, but they none the less revered him as the adopted "son of God." Thus, the debate began to chart its territory between two poles: the full humanity and the full deity of Jesus.

Finally, the Council of Nicaea in AD 325 made a bold statement in favour of Christ's full deity. He is "true God of true God, begotten not made, being of

Can We Believe Jesus Is Both?

by Karla Wübbenhorst

one substance with the Father.” That statement marked a deliberate decision to support Athanasius, who argued for an equality of Father, Son and Spirit, and to refute Arius, his fellow priest in Alexandria, who contended for a hierarchy placing the Father above and before the Son. But the contentious Nicene statement “of one substance with the Father” only added fuel to the fire, inviting more speculation as to how, exactly, this “substance” was shared.

There were further councils. At Constantinople in 381, Apollonarius was denounced for teaching that the second person of the Trinity remained wholly spiritual while using a mortal, human body as a sort of medium. At Ephesus in

discover how relevant the fifth century still is. Among those who consider themselves followers of Jesus, the Jehovah’s Witnesses are an interesting case. Their understanding — that Jesus is the incarnation of an archangel, created before the world, but not equal with God — is most akin to that of Arius.

Early this year, I had a conversation with Britain’s proverbial “man in the pub.” He was definite that he was not “a believer” but, not wanting to give offence, he assured me he thought Jesus a truly great man, one of the world’s truly great men — a philosopher, a teacher, an inspiration! He was willing to grant Jesus an exalted kind of humanity; but, if there is a God, he would be a general, oversee-

Whereas the first fellow denied Jesus was fully God, the second denied him a full and real humanity. Against the myriad ways of understanding Jesus which lean toward one or the other of these alternatives, the Church’s view, established at Nicaea and Chalcedon, has proved a delicate but durable balance. At the Reformation in the 16th century, when so much was being overturned in the Church, the ancient account of Jesus survived the “trial-by-Scripture.” Thus, the language of the *Westminster Confession* reinforces the ecumenical formulas: *The Son of God, the second person in the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance, and equal with the Father, did, when the fullness of time was come, take upon himself man’s nature, with all the essential properties and common infirmities thereof, yet without sin; being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, of her substance. So that two whole, perfect and distinct natures, the Godhead and the manhood, were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition or confusion, which person is very God and very man, yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and man.*

If any new emphasis occurred in the Reformers, it was to tie the account of Christ’s person (in terms of the human and divine natures) more closely to his work as Saviour of the world. It is because Christ is fully God and fully human that his death and resurrection can benefit us at all. If he were not fully God, but merely a godly man, he could not unpronounce the sentence of sin that God had pronounced. If he were not fully human, but a different sort of species, his obedience in death could never cancel human disobedience, nor could the resurrection he merited be passed to us. Also, if the death and resurrection of Christ give us a measure of God’s heart, what would it say about God if we believed in a merely human Jesus? The cross would then be a sadistic event in which God poured out his anger on an innocent man, yet remained untouched and uninvolved himself. It is no better if Jesus were simply God. Then, we would have to see his death and all his human experience as a

If Jesus is not God, God’s inner nature remains hidden to us

431, the Church contradicted the students of Nestorius who believed Jesus to have been a man in special communion, but of will only, with the second person of the divine Trinity. The variations of mistaken understanding might have been endless; so, finally, at the Council of Chalcedon in 451, a statement was drafted setting the limits within which Jesus could be properly understood. The result was “the Chalcedonian definition.” It states that, in the one “person” of Jesus, there are two “natures,” human and divine, that are united with neither “separation” nor “confusion.”

Almost everything has changed since the time of the ancient councils. “Substance,” “person” and “nature” no longer mean anything like what was meant in the Early Church. But we don’t have to scratch modern ideas about Jesus hard to

ing kind of heavenly God, not a God “up close and personal” like the Church’s “Lord Jesus.”

Then, there was the fellow I met at a Christmas party two years ago who subscribed to the New Age notion of divinization. He was of the opinion that Jesus, like himself (though he admitted to being at a lesser level), was a fully actualized man; that is, a god. Most people, he said, are human because they do not fulfil their potential to be anything more; but some who walk the earth are indeed gods, and such a one was Jesus.

More commonly, we meet with those who consider it irrelevant that Jesus walked the earth at all. They understand “Jesus” as the God-ideal, a name for all that is “highest” and “best,” an immanent, benevolent but impersonal force at large in the world.

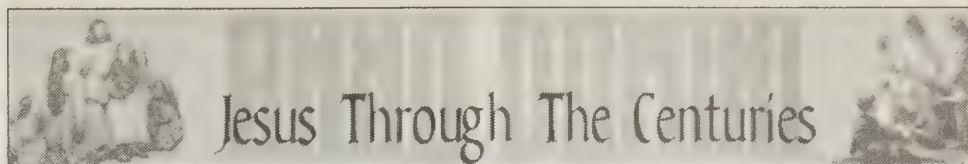
mere sham. God leaves *us* to die the real death, to suffer the real temptation, but daintily excuses himself.

The Protestant Reformers thought of the full humanity and full deity of Christ as a condition for his atoning work. The Mediator has a certain pedigree that uniquely suits him for the work of mediation. This was a new emphasis but not a new idea. From Athanasius in the fourth century to Anselm in the 11th, serious meditation on the two natures of Jesus always led back to the death and resurrection events.

The first real revolution in thought about Jesus since the time of the Early Church councils happened in the 1800s with Friedrich Schleiermacher. He considered the statements representing Jesus as, at the same time, fully God and fully human not only paradoxical but nonsensical. How could someone who was fully God — all-knowing, all-powerful and everywhere present — be, at the same time, fully human, which implied limitation by space, time and the body? To solve his problem, Schleiermacher invented what is called “Christology from below.”

Nicaea and Chalcedon had followed the fourth Gospel by beginning in eternity with the second person of the Trinity who, at a certain point in time, assumed flesh. This “top-down” approach understands Jesus as “the Incarnate Deity.” The “bottom-up” approach sees Jesus as the perfect human being existing in God’s intended future and realized in the historic life of Jesus. This approach views Christ as “the second Adam” and “the image of God,” reflecting more the language of the Epistles than the Gospel of John. As the perfect human being that God intended at creation, Christ can be called the “image of God” without implying identical substance.

Schleiermacher’s view has since had great influence among both Protestants and Roman Catholics. In its most extreme degree, it results in views such as those of John Hick, Ruth Page and Dominic O’Connor who believe the “two natures” refer to two ways in which Christ behaved. When he healed and pronounced forgiveness of sins, he was behaving like God; when he thirsted and wept, he was



Jesus Through The Centuries

Jesus, the True Image

David J. Goa

The image of Jesus as the Son of Man was an attempt to understand the humanity of Jesus, God incarnate. The vision of Jesus as the true image of God was an exploration of the divinity that resides in human nature. This view of human nature as the “image and likeness of God” emerged during the debates that raged over Christian iconography in the eighth and ninth centuries. It hit at the heart of the questions: How do we understand Jesus? How can an image capture the meaning of Christ? As theologians reflected upon these questions, they engaged in a contemplation of the meaning of human nature. Human nature was seen as created by the same God and participating in the same transcendent creativity as Jesus, the uncreated true image of the Divine. **R**

David J. Goa is curator of folklife, Provincial Museum of Alberta, and teaches at Saint Stephen’s College, University of Alberta. He is the curator of *Anno Domini*, a major international exhibition opening October 7, 2000.



Christ Healing the Blind Man (1881). Engraving. Book illustration. Holy Bible. Containing the Old and New Testaments, Translated out of the Original Tongues ... with over 2,500 fine Scripture Illustrations, on Steel, Wood, and in Colors. Detroit, MI, and Hamilton, ON: F. B. Dickerson & Co., 1881.

behaving like a human being. But these “natures” say nothing about the Word, the second person of the triune God, actually entering our flesh and dwelling among us on earth. They also say nothing about Christ’s “godly” ability to be with us beyond the temporal span of his human life “to the end of the age.”

Alongside the other voices in modern theology, our own *Living Faith* has this to say: **God became man and dwelt among us. In silence we ponder, in awe we confess this amazing truth. Con-**

ceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, the eternal Son of God humbled himself to be one with us. To Israel and to the world came God in Christ. To call Jesus Christ the Son of God is to say that he is God of God, Light of Light begotten not made. To see Jesus is to see God incarnate. To know the Son is to know the Father.... Jesus was truly human. Tried and tested as we are, yet without sin, he experienced the depths of life. Jesus ... showed us what it means to be a child of

God. Jesus is the Mediator through whom God has come to us and through whom we come to God. Ours is a statement that reaffirms the ecumenical Nicene-Chalcedonian consensus.

The theological tradition can be a bit like the gifts of the Wise Men — greeted by practical folk with more confusion than joy, cherished as awesome and valuable but likely to live on a dark shelf with other exotic and useless heirlooms. After all, what do you *do* with a cruet of myrrh? And what do we do with the “Chalcedonian definition” on the cusp of the third millennium?

Bill Phipps, Tom Harpur and others, who have gone on record as saying that Jesus is not God, present us with one

way forward: we can jettison what we cannot readily understand. But if we cease to call Jesus God, we exclude ourselves from a rare instance of ecumenical agreement.

More compelling than the authority of the Church, however, is the authority of God’s own revelation. Our own reason and experience seem shaky ground for contradicting the word of John (1:1), Thomas (John 20:28) and those who wrote Hebrews (1:8) and Colossians (1:19). If we cease to call Jesus God, we cannot rightly pray to him or worship him or necessarily believe any of the other things he says or promises. Why should we believe the message of reconciliation achieved on the cross, the avail-

ability of the promised Holy Spirit as a present power in our lives, or the hope of future glory if Jesus lied and gave us false credentials? Worst of all, if Jesus is not God, God’s inner nature remains hidden to us. We had presumed that in the tears of Jesus we had seen the pity of God and, in his anger, God’s judgment (T. F. Torrance); but, if Jesus is not truly God’s Word, then theology is just a heap of human words.

Similarly, there are consequences when we don’t take the humanity of Christ seriously. God, in that case, remains aloof from the mess and grit of the life we know. There will always be those who stay away from the church because of a bad experience with “hypocritical” Christians. But there are also people who are genuinely impressed — and daunted — by the high standards of Christian living. The Christians they know seem to have neat, picture-perfect lives whereas their own are forever out of control. This is the sort of person I imagine wistfully singing Joan Osborne’s 1996 pop song: “What if God was one of us, just a slob like one of us, just a stranger on the bus, trying to make his way home, nobody callin’ on the phone.” You could talk to such a God about feeling useless and lonely and lost, but as it is, “Yeah, yeah, God is great; yeah, yeah, God is good.” God is a friend to the “beautiful people” but irrelevant to the likes of you and me.

The Church, however, has traditionally taught that Jesus is the sort of mediator who comes to us in our messy, gritty, earthy place so that we can approach all the beauty and the purity of God. The incarnation of Christ is, therefore, the reason the Church’s ministry extends beyond the four walls of the sanctuary and beyond the confines of the communicant’s roll. If we are followers of Christ and imitators of God, we must go where he has gone before us.

In the wake of the new millennium, the Church may feel the need to clean house and sort the legacy of the past 2,000 years into piles of what it needs and what it can better do without. I hope we choose to cling to the understanding of Jesus worked out in the Early Church — not simply because of a sentimentalism for the old familiar formulas or a fondness

Questions for Discussion:

1. What do the following hymn and carol texts claim about Jesus? In the 1997 *Book of Praise*, 139, 145, 146, 151, 154, 159-161, 163, 166, 168-169, 341, 352, 356, 370, 375, 379 or, in the 1972 *Book of Praise*, 133, 138, 145, 160, 168, 175, 183, 210, 213, 229, 238-239, 252. See also the text “Praise Be to Christ in Whom We See” by Timothy Dudley-Smith (sung to the traditional tune “Ye Banks and Braes”); “Meekness and Majesty,” words and music by Graham Kendrick; and the collection “Heaven Shall Not Wait” by John Bell and Graham Maule (Wild Goose, 1987).
2. The early Christians identified themselves as those who believed “Jesus Christ” to be “God’s Son,” the “Saviour” (the Greek acronym designated by the sign of the fish). What does it mean to add to the personal name Jesus, the titles “Christ,” “God’s Son” and “Saviour”? What is the logical connection between being God’s Son, the Christ, and the Saviour?
3. Compare the language of the *Westminster Confession* with that of *Living Faith* (above). Are they saying exactly the same thing? If there are different emphases, what do you take to be the reason for this? Do both reflect the biblical teaching? (See the list of Bible references in For Further Study.)
4. How does the Incarnation, the “taking of (hu)manhood into God,” revealed to God’s people at a certain point in history, in a certain historic life, transform the way we must ever think of God (i.e., in the Old Testament, in our present day and in the future)? Is this understanding of God unique to the Christian faith among world religions?
5. We believe we can know with some confidence what God is like. We also believe God empathizes with us in our humanness as one who “has been there.” Could this have been achieved otherwise than through a Mediator, both truly human and truly God?
6. Imagine your conversation with the man in the pub or the man at the Christmas party. How would you begin to explain what is at stake for Christians in the belief that Jesus is the unique occurrence of the one God in human flesh? Where would your dialogue with the writer of Joan Osborne’s lyrics begin?
7. Together with his Christological heresy, Bill Phipps has said many challenging things about the elimination of poverty etc. Is the belief that Jesus is really God irrelevant to such social goals?

For Further Study:

- Certain passages of Scripture are recurrent in the classical discussions about Jesus. See John 1:1-14, Colossians 1:15-23 (Christ's divinity predates the creation of the world and his agency is at work in creation). Philippians 2:5-11 (Christ's equality with God is prior to his humiliation and exaltation). Matthew 1:20, Luke 1:35 (Jesus is the child of Mary and the Spirit, thus truly human and truly God) and II Corinthians 5:21, Hebrews 2:14-18 (Jesus' humanity is unlike ours only in his sinlessness). See also Matthew 3:16-17, 17:5, 10:32-33, 16:13-17, 28:18-20; Mark 14:61-64; Luke 10:21-22; John 5:19-47, 8:28-29, 58, 10:33-38, 12:44-50, 14:8-14, 15:26, 20:17, 28; I Timothy 3:16.
- Excerpts from the arguments of Athanasius and Anselm mentioned above as well as other relevant classical sources can be found in Alister McGrath's *Christian Theology Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995). This is the companion volume to his *Introduction to Christian Theology* (*ibid.*) which has comprehensive sections on the person and work of Christ.
- Some classic Christological texts (and modern interpretations) can also be found on the Internet. Check these sites:

<http://www.bu.edu/people/bpstone/theology/theology.html>

<http://www.credo.ndirect.co.uk/incarnat.html>

<http://www.gty.org/~phil/creeds.htm>

http://members.tripod.com/~Michael_Bremmer/incarn.htm.

The Christological debate in its recent Canadian context (i.e., the Phipps controversy) is admirably chronicled at <http://www.igs.net/~tonyc/mod.html>.

- The second lesson in the *Alpha* series is on the person of Christ. It relies on the apologetics of C. S. Lewis which are worth reading in their full form. Michael Green, a contemporary apologist, has also published resources on the person of Christ such as *Who Is This Jesus?*

for "Hark the Herald" but because we truly value and praise the mystery that was done for us in Jesus of Nazareth. If *this* Christ were to take his proper place at the centre of our worship and Christian walk, the Church might well be renewed to its true identity: "Christ together with his people" (*Living Faith*). No ancient guru or celestial visitant can have the present and ongoing significance in the life of the Church that Christ, through Incarnation, can claim to have.

Living Faith has done the great service of translating the exotic, antique language of Nicaea and Chalcedon into the modern idiom so it is accessible for Christians to study and confess and for "seekers" to consult. Unfortunately, many Christians look on theology in any idiom as the Grinch who stole Christmas — a draught of cold air on the cozy scene of our manger-side adoration. We may find, however, that the new millennium will call us more seriously than ever to the

task of mission — accounting for our hope before the world. In this case, our religious feeling may make sense to us, but not to the onlooker, and our ability to introduce the Baby may depend on the theology we carry in the diaper bag. Of course, what counts more than words of introduction is the way we allow Emmanuel-truth to pervade *our* "living faith." Because Jesus is truly God and truly human, we live with a God who is known to us and to whom we are fully known. So all the good news and glorious hope we find in the mouth of Jesus is trustworthy and true. **R**

Karla Wübbenhorst, a graduate of The Presbyterian College, is currently doing post-graduate work at the University of Aberdeen.

Next month:

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Christmas Stalking

by David Webber

I don't think I like this. Let's get the dickens out of here!" Linda said in an alarming whisper.

We had been out on snowshoes all day. The snow was at least 15 metres deep in the mountain pass, and we had been taking turns breaking a trail. Our journey had taken us up an old wagon trail for several miles. There, we had lit a small fire to toast our cheese sandwiches and make a billycan full of sweet tea. Now, we were returning on the same trail. The going was easy since it was well beaten down from our trip in. The bush was beautiful and filled with the silence and solitude that only isolation and heavy snow cover can furnish. That is why I was so surprised at the alarm in Linda's voice when she spoke.

"That darn cat has been following us all day," she said. "And he is a big one, too."

We both knelt down on the front of our Trapper Nelson snowshoes and closely examined the fresh cougar tracks that were in the middle of the snowshoe trail we had made in the morning. They were almost 13 centimetres wide in the

packed snow of the trail, ranking this cougar a large specimen in anyone's record book. The tracks were irregular, deliberate and not far apart, indicating the cougar was moving slowly. It had moved off the trail when it heard us returning, floundering through the snow and into a thicket of young fir trees. It was likely watching us as we spoke.

"Do you think he is hungry, curious or simply using our snowshoe trail for easy passage?" queried Linda, still speaking in a whisper.

"I don't know for sure if he is curious or hungry,"

I said. "As far as I am concerned, it doesn't matter. From what I know about cougars, the way this fella's tracks are so irregular and, yet, deliberate indicates he is probably stalking us. If he is stalking us, it kind of rules out the easy passage theory, doesn't it? I think it's time we made a wee exit!"

I spoke with all the calmness I could. I certainly wasn't feeling that way. I was

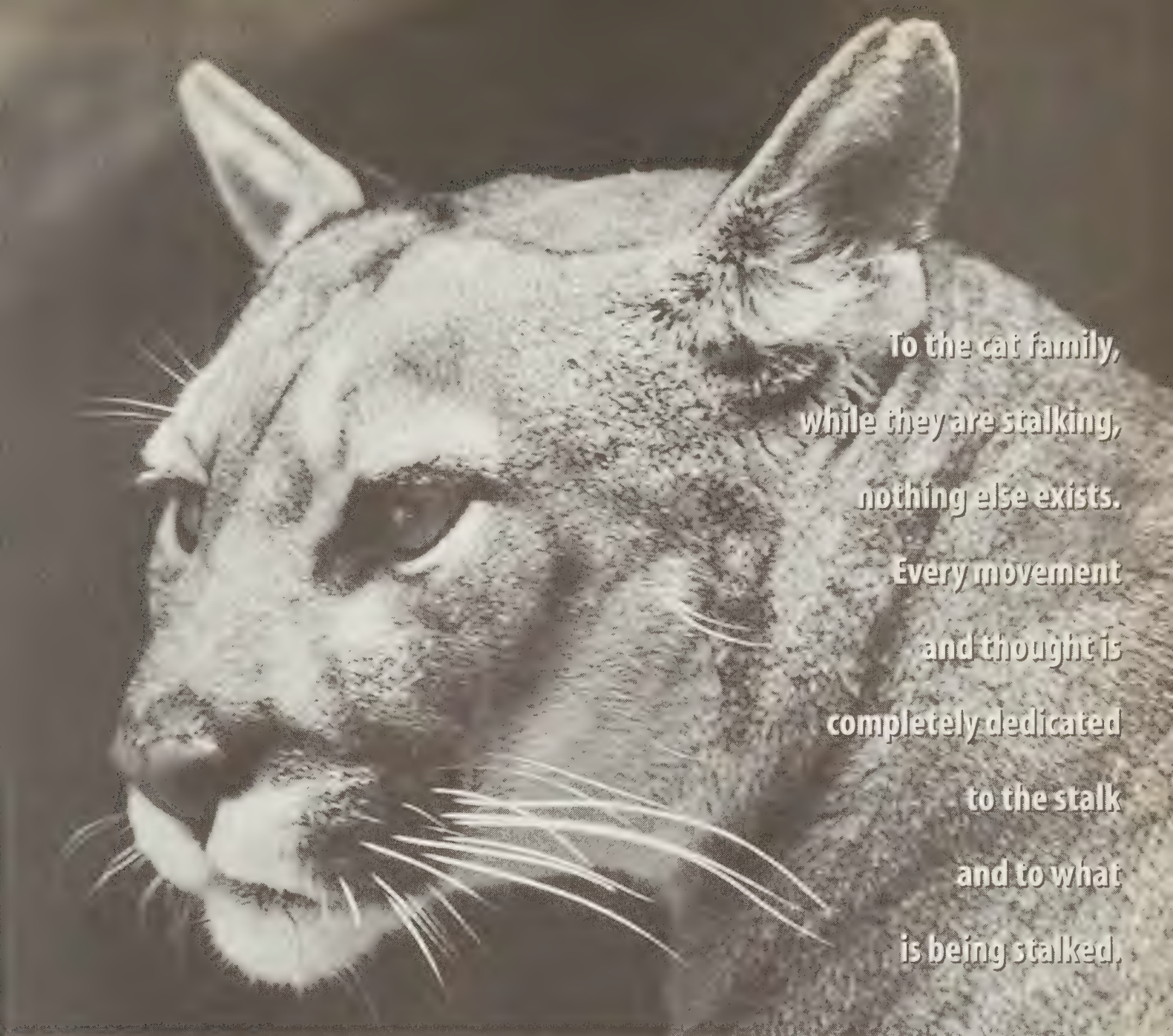
wishing I had brought my rifle or even our Airedale terrier, well-known for putting the run on anything, including large bears. But I had not and, now, there was nothing to do but boldly snowshoe back toward our 4x4 pickup, showing as much boldness and bravado as our meagre acting abilities could muster.

And that is exactly what we did, without a courtesy call from Tom Cougar.

This cougar experience happened several years ago in the bush near the summit of the Blueberry Pass in Southern British Columbia. It has left a lasting impression on me about the nature

of cougars and their habit of deliberate stalking. If you have ever watched the family cat after a mouse in the tall grass at the edge of your lawn, you know what I mean by "deliberate stalking." Each stalking movement is slow, calculated and completely focused on obtaining what is being hunted. To the cat family, while they are stalking, nothing else exists. Every movement and thought is

**At Christmas,
Christians need
to stalk peace
as a cougar
stalks its prey**



To the cat family,
while they are stalking,
nothing else exists.
Every movement
and thought is
completely dedicated
to the stalk
and to what
is being stalked.

completely dedicated to the stalk and to what is being stalked.

As I make my preparations during Advent for the Christmas season, this image from nature of deliberate stalking is lodged in my mind, along with a Christmas dilemma. This season is all about peace. For Christians, it is a particular kind of peace. It is the peace of Christ. Christ said to his followers: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid" (John 14:27). And, yet, every Christmas, and more times throughout the year than I like to admit, the peace of Christ seems to elude me.

Particularly at Christmas, my life

seems to become frantic and fractured. There are a thousand things to do and less than half enough time to do them. Every Christmas finds me whipping myself into a seasonal lather of busyness. It affects every aspect of my life, work and family. Each year, I sing the same lament: "Oh, I just can't seem to get into the Christmas spirit this year." What is missing is the experience of the peace of Christ that the world cannot give or understand. I know this mystical peace at other times in the year, but hardly ever at Christmas.

It strikes me that inherent in the giving of something is the receiving. Christ gives his peace — that is the biblical promise. But I wonder how I go about receiving it at Christmas? Do I simply go about life and wait for it to surprise me

on some wintry street corner, perhaps as I take a second or two to gaze at the seasonal display of lights and, for a nanosecond, enjoy its nurture? This hardly seems adequate.

This year, it comes to my mind that, perhaps, that big cat on the Blueberry Pass and my experience of being stalked have something to teach me about discipleship. Could it be that the peace that so eludes me at Christmas needs stalking? Perhaps I need to become intentional about the peace of Christ, particularly at frantic, fractured, busy times like Christmas. Perhaps I need to stalk peace in the same slow, calculating, deliberate and focused fashion as Tom Cougar stalked Linda and me in that snowy pass so many years ago. As to peace, perhaps

I need to become like that big cat — while he was stalking, nothing else existed, every movement and thought were completely dedicated to the stalk and to what was being stalked. My sense is that if I approach the peace of Christ this way, I stand a better chance of experiencing it.

If I look at this whole question of stalking Christmas peace or, for that matter, peace at any time of the year through the binoculars of history, I find what I am thinking about is borne out in the history of Christian spirituality. From Jesus, to the Apostles, to the Desert Fathers, to the Monastic Brothers, to the early Reformers, to the Puritans and to the Quakers, there is a constant thread of stalking peace through the Christian discipline of contemplative prayer. Contemplative prayer is nothing more or less than slowly, deliberately, intentionally and completely focusing on Christ. This is not the worrying in front of God that many of my fleeting prayers have become. Rather, it is the kind prayer born out of

solitude, silence and meditation. It is the kind of prayer in which God is the focus, not myself or anyone or anything else. It is prayer for God's sake, not mine. It is prayer that seeks to place oneself in the exclusive presence of God for God to do with as God wills. It is prayer that listens much and speaks little. It is the kind of prayer the likes of Thomas à Kempis, Brother Lawrence, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Thomas Merton, Henri Nouwen, Richard Foster and Eugene Peterson have written about so profoundly.

I have done it before and I must do it again. It is so easy to do, this stalking peace. For me, it involves carving out a time and a place to be alone and silent. There, in my "prayer closet," I find a passage of Scripture, often from the Psalms, to help me focus. I ask Christ to be present to me as I read a verse or two over and over until I no longer need to read it but can simply say it over and over in my mind until it becomes a part of me. After a time, I sit in silence and, when I feel as though I have somehow climbed upon

the knee of God where I am but a wee child, I sit for God there. There, I am free to speak as a child to a completely loving parent, or to listen or to be silent. And, then, when the time is right, usually after a half-hour or so, I thank God and slowly return to what he has placed in my day for me. I take this time spent with God and for God into the day with me, often pausing to thank him once again. And, somehow, the peace of Christ that the world cannot understand seeps into the moment and even into the entire day.

This Advent, in the light of memories of snowy days and cougars stalking, in the sensing of my present darkness and the need for the experience of the peace of Christ at Christmas, I am going to be Christmas stalking.

The peace of Christ be with you! **R**

David Webber is a minister of the Cariboo Presbyterian Church, a house church ministry in the Cariboo district of British Columbia. This article appears in his recently published book *From Under a Blazing Aspen*.

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Presbyterian
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Too Late the Millennium

by Joseph C. McLelland

The trouble with dates is dating. If it's two millennia after the birth of Jesus, then it's already past. According to the Bible, Caesar Augustus and King Herod fix the date of Christmas — about 4 BC. So we missed the big event. A further irony is that only Christians worry about this. For Jews, it will be 5760 (since the Exodus), for Muslims 1420 (since the Hejira of Muhammad), for many Hindus 5102 (Kali Year), for Buddhists 2542, and so on.

However pundits will describe our fading century, the coming one promises even more rapid social change. (Judging by the heightened “sex and violence” in the media at century's end, we're not in for any “brave new world,” merely one that's more infantile and more amoral than ever; but that's another story.) Our Gospel faces even more challenges, more schemes to save the church if not the world, more plans and projects to keep our professionals busy.

towards the poor.” It also reflects those twin doctrines of vocation and stewardship central to our Reformed heritage.

If we enter the third millennium after Christ in the spirit of his Advent — shepherds and stable and all that — then the chief virtue to which we're being summoned is *humility*. That's the proper mood to enter upon a bold, even romantic scheme designed to reverse the economic order and try to fulfil Mary's call in the *Magnificat* for justice:

**If we enter the third millennium after Christ in the spirit of his Advent,
then the chief virtue to which we're being summoned is humility**

While some have replaced BC and AD (Year of our Lord) with BCE and CE (Common Era), Christians can still claim they've introduced most of the world (China's billion and more) to what is better called the “Commercial Era.” Isn't it our global economy that's pushing the event and warning us about the deadly computer virus poised to strike at Y2K?

Talk of the millennium seems to have overcome talk of the next century. Remember Wilfrid Laurier's comment that, while the 19th century belonged to the United States, “Canada shall fill the 20th century”? One prestigious U.S. journal calls itself *The Christian Century* and is, presumably, searching for a new name: “The Post-Christian Century”?

Take the Presbyterian FLAMES project — now there's a bright idea. Right now, for instance (June 1999-June 2000), the focus is on “mission and justice.” The time has come to tie these together and tread boldly where others have not yet gone. I'm all for Jubilee, a favourite theme of mine ever since first reading Leviticus. The name comes from the sound of trumpets (*yobel*), declaring a special year to celebrate the Lord's plenty, and inviting our happy dedication to sharing the wealth. The “debt reduction” scheme to help Third World countries out of their deadly circle of poverty is surely a creative challenge to our global power structures. Its mechanics, of course, are far from clear and will not be popular, but its thrust comes from the biblical “bias

“He has scattered the proud ...
he has put down the mighty from their
thrones,
and exalted those of low degree;
he has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent empty away ...”

(At Christmas, what do you give “the man who has everything”? Someone else's debts.)

If the ancient laws of the fiftieth year can be applied to the coming millennium, perhaps it will indeed become a Year of our Lord (*Anno Domini*), and Christians will be a “Jubilee People.” **R**

Joseph C. McLelland is emeritus professor of McGill University and The Presbyterian College, Montreal, and a contributing editor of this magazine.

Forum

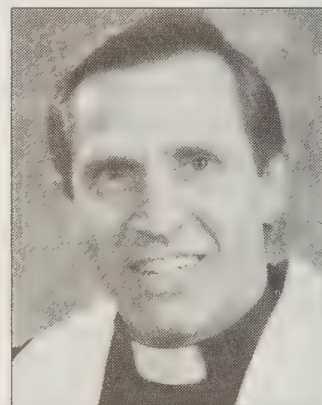
Should the church condemn the commercialization of Christmas or see it as an opportunity for evangelism?

Ivan Dambrowitz

New Liskeard, Ontario

Affirmative action is more effective than a negative critique. The church's condemnation of the commercialization of Christmas would be a wasted moment. Those who only commercialize the celebrated moment of Christ's birth are not affected by our protestations. Those who might hear us would feel we had sour grapes in our mouth.

It amazes me that the darkest places in many communities at Christmas are Christian churches. No light, no manger scene, no music — dark holes in the midst of the artificial light of the commercialized Christmas. Let our light shine with a presentation of Christ at Christmas. Get out the light, light up the stages, turn on the music — "Hark! the herald angels sing glory to the newborn King"! This Christmas, give them a taste of what amazed the shepherds. It will not end the commercialization of Christmas but, even with the neon lights, it could point to a different way to understand the Christ in Christmas. Churches do well at celebrating Christ's birth in the sanctuary; now, let us open our doors to those on the outside who wonder if Christmas is more than neon lights.



Allyson Macleod

Keswick, Ontario

While shopping at a large Christian denominational bookstore last year, I learned that all the greeting cards were inscribed with the salutation "Happy Holidays." It was an effort, they said, to be tolerant to all the patrons who enter the store. What a sad commentary on the church's fear of evangelism. What a missed opportunity to claim Christmas as our celebration to mark the birth of Jesus, the Saviour, in our midst. After all, how will seekers ever find the Christ of Easter if we do not introduce them to the Jesus of Christmas?

Christmas is the one certain opportunity we have every year to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ to those who haven't yet met him. It's a natural occasion to turn our conversations to the subject of faith for Christ is already present. Whether believer or seeker, his name is on our lips: in our greetings of "Merry Christmas" or as we sing a rousing chorus of "O come, let us adore him." People fill churches looking for "something," perhaps only a feeling of nostalgia or sentimentalism. But as the Apostle Paul pointed out in Athens, what they worship as something unknown we can now make known to them in Christ.



Janis Erickson

Dixonville, Alberta

Christmas has become a time of year when most of us feel the crush of expectations created primarily by commerce. We are overwhelmed by media notions of what produces peace, joy and goodwill. Advertisers artfully create warm fuzzies to enhance profit margins. We consumers are compelled to get the cards in the mail and the baking ready, find the perfect tree, create the holiday atmosphere in our homes, make anxious decisions about who to buy for and how much to spend. We often begin the new year with extra weight, extra debt and the feeling something is not quite right.

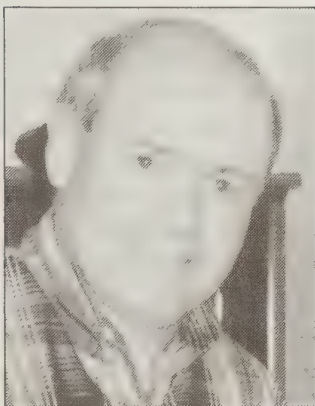
Who among us would not prefer to be free of some of these bizarre decisions and the associated anguish? Everyone has occasionally been victimized at Christmastime. Perhaps Christians suffer a little more intensely because of conflicting feelings. We know the real Christmas story. We understand that what comes across in the name of commerce is manipulative and essentially false. It's tough to escape, and we experience it firsthand. We are, therefore, in a position both to condemn this commercialism and to promote the fact of Christ's birth. We must continue to anticipate the guidance of the Holy Spirit as we discover new ways to celebrate. We need to share the hope that Christ's birth gives us. Maybe we need to express God's generosity by giving a gift or two. Let's not condemn gift-giving, but let's try to prevent it from taking over at Christmastime.

Betty Ferguson

Simcoe, Ontario

Christians regret that a large majority of society knows little of the true origin of Christmas; but, at least, we have or could have society's attention for a few weeks. Let us not waste this opportunity. Perhaps the church could embark on a major campaign to spread the good news of the gift of Jesus through advertising in the most popular newspapers beside advertisements for gift-giving. What better gift could each congregation, regardless of size, give to society through local newspapers than the message of the gift of God's Son to the world!

Along with jumping on the advertising bandwagon, we should keep Jesus in the forefront of our celebrations.



Paul Gardiner

Stouffville, Ontario

Any celebration of Christmas can be an opportunity for evangelism. Even the date chosen to celebrate Christmas is not based on biblical references but on the need to capitalize on an older pagan winter festival. Christmas celebrations may have reached epidemic proportions in today's plugged-in world, but the message of "peace and goodwill to all people" still shines through the corporate quest for the bottom line.

We should be thankful that commercialization has helped to make the story of the first Christmas known throughout the world. In our media-driven, image-sensitive world, there are many Christian wannabes in December. What better opportunity could we have: free advertising with no strings attached! We in the church have a wonderful opportunity each Christmas to evangelize and help those wannabes understand more fully why Christ came to be among us and the marvellous story of God's redemptive love.

I think we should go for it. **R**

What Kind of C

by Kenneth L. Gobble

I can never quite decide if the tradition of sending Christmas greetings is mostly a blessing or a headache. If I send even one Christmas card, I have to decide what kind of card to send. Maybe you do as I have sometimes done — buy a box of secular cards to send to your non-religious friends and a box of religious cards to send to your friends who share your faith tradition.

On my visit to the local Hallmark store, I decided to examine the non-religious cards first. Their display took up twice as many shelves as the religious cards. The secular cards had artwork with lots of winter scenes, wreaths and evergreen trees. They contained messages such as: "With best wishes for the holidays and the coming year," "Greetings of the season and best wishes for the new year" and "May the warmth of the holiday season fill your home with happiness." One card that came dangerously close to a religious theme had a picture of an angel lovingly holding the earth in its hands and the message "Let us love the world to peace." Kinda cute. Another contained a smiling snowman on the outside and the words "Jolly Holidays" on the inside.

All very nice, warm sentiments guaranteed not to offend anyone, be the recipient Gentile or Jew, Hindu or Buddhist, Jerry Falwell or the mysteriously missing Madalyn Murray O'Hair.

What about the cards in the religious section? As I expected, the artwork and graphics here were all in good taste. After all, *this was Hallmark*, sponsor of the high quality *Hallmark Hall of Fame* TV specials.

Here were artistic renderings of cherubs playing musical instruments with the words, "Sometimes, if we listen, we can almost hear the angels." Here, on card after card, were the Wise Men bear-

ing their gifts, scenes of that little town of Bethlehem, angels singing anthems, and an occasional mother holding child. This year, at least, shepherds seemed to be out of fashion. The sentiments expressed in words did have a slightly more religious flavour than did the cards in the non-religious section. A few of them actually mentioned "God" as in "God bless you in this joyous season."

Buyers who preferred religious cards could choose from among 50 different designs. Among those 50, I found one that had the word "Jesus" and two that had the word "Christ." There was but one Bible verse quoted among the 50 cards, and it was from the Old Testament. To be fair, there were a few cards that used the word "Saviour" and a few that contained the phrase "his birth."

Apparently, Hallmark has decided that good taste at Christmastime means downplaying all that Jesus stuff. Hallmark, after all, has been in the business long enough to know what sells.

A few years ago, I enjoyed reading one of William Raspberry's columns in which he wrote about receiving a Christmas card from a friend that read:

"I sincerely wish that you may enjoy the holiday and/or celebration of your religious, ethnic or socio-political choice over the coming weeks whenever it/they may fall and whatever it/they may be so-named ... Now if this card still makes someone angry, the h--- with 'em."

Raspberry said he thought the card was funny at first. But when he reflected on it, he wasn't so sure. He wrote: "Friends who used to give you a hearty 'Merry Christmas!' now offer a generic 'Seasons Greetings' or, if they're super careful, 'Have a good one.'" Asked Raspberry, "Is it not just possible that anti-religious bias masquerading as religious neutrality is costing more than we have been willing to acknowledge?"

That's a good question about what the

Christmas Card to Send

religious holiday called "Christmas" has become in our society. It has special relevance to those of us for whom Christmas is not merely a season of generic good cheer, not merely a holiday, but a *holy* day.

There is nothing generic about the Bible's account of the first Christmas. Luke the Gospel writer tells about a particular event that began with a particular woman named Mary who is pregnant and not married. In the time and place Mary lived, bearing a child out of wedlock was a horrible disgrace. How will Joseph, her fiancé, react when she breaks the news to him? Will he end the engagement and hold her up to ridicule and shame? And what will Mary's cousin Elizabeth, the wife of a priest, say when she finds out?

When Mary arrives at Elizabeth's home, Elizabeth grasps the situation just by looking at Mary. And Elizabeth cries out: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb." Mary is welcomed with open arms.

And, then, Mary breaks into song.
"My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my
Saviour ..."

Mary's song spells out what God is doing in the world: the powerful brought low, the lowly lifted up, the hungry fed, the rich sent away empty. This is religious faith translated into a vision of social justice. Later, when Luke gives the details of the son born to Mary, we understand what this birth means. It means God chooses to come to the world, not as a prince born to a royal family living in a grand palace, but as a child born to an unmarried peasant woman who must bear her child in a cattle shed. Salvation arrives in the most unlikely ways and places.

All the lovely Christmas cards to the contrary, there was nothing especially beautiful about the first Christmas. The

Saviour of the world was born to Mary and Joseph, alone and afraid in a strange village. It was Mary's first child. No other woman was there to help her through the birthing — no female relative, not even a midwife. While the shepherds may have heard the angels singing that night, there is no evidence Mary and Joseph heard them.

Searching for the Christmas message

That's what Christmas means: God coming to us in a way we never could have predicted, in a way that confounds every human expectation, in a way

that threatens the status quo. For after this night, nothing will ever be the same.

There are those who, with the eyes of faith, can see what God was up to in that Bethlehem stable. To them — to us — it is good news of great joy. It is why the angels sang that night. It is why we celebrate Christmas with the music of gladness.

Why should we soft-pedal our joy by wishing our neighbours "Happy Holidays"? If our co-worker or friend is Jewish, surely we can extend greetings for a joyous Hanukkah. If we have Muslim acquaintances, we can wish them appropriate greetings on their holy days. But as we approach our own holy day, I urge all of us to stop stifling our joy. Let us say "Merry Christmas" to those we meet, and say it with genuine smiles on our faces.

It is disabling for faith to fear what someone will think, to project that fear into an assumption. What if Jesus had worried that people might find his message not quite appropriate, not tasteful enough? Would he have watered down his message? Sweetened it? If so, those spiritually needy people in Jesus' day would have heard either a falsely soothing message, a cheerful "have-a-nice-day," or a message so inoffensively generic they would have forgotten it within minutes.

We do not honour someone else's religious convictions by hiding our own.

How should we choose what kind of Christmas card to send? Well, we may have to search a bit for one that says what we want to say. Maybe we can find the kind that are blank inside and write our own greeting. But whatever greeting we send, let's try to get something in there about the birth of Jesus, the one we call Lord, Saviour, Prince of Peace. Choose a message that expresses the good news of great joy that his coming represents.

Throw out all those innocuous cards with cute snowmen and sweet reindeer and silver bells. Oh, keep a Santa Claus or two for the children if you must. Historically, at least, he was a Christian saint. But forget the rest. There are plenty of people to send them, people for whom Christmas is little more than a round of parties and a stack of gifts that will have to be exchanged later.

You say it's too late, you've already sent out all your cards? Then go through the cards you receive and pick out those that say it best. Hang them up where you can see them in the coming days. And, next year, when you buy your Christmas cards ... **R**

Kenneth Gible is a free-lance writer living in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania.

Christmas Rush

All the crazy preparations make sense. We shake our heads, say we are nuts. But someone must prepare all feasts, turn the spit while the fresh flesh crackles, seared to crisp juiciness. The birth pangs are past. Now we must whirl about, sing and dance our amazement that all creation bends down, doubles over, cries out with ever new life.

— Carol Hamilton

#4 in the series on natural church development

Nurturing Passion for Jesus

by G. John Baergen

In breathless anticipation, he waits, a smile tugging at his lips as he remembers their last conversation. He chuckles, recalling how he couldn't help but share it with his friends. You can't keep priceless stuff like that to yourself! He sees her in the distance. Breaking into joyful laughter, he moves to meet her. He can't bear to miss any opportunity to be with her. Just being with her means fresh discovery and learning. Times together are, at once, revealing and affirming. He is filled with wonder that she chose him!

This portrays the zeal and fervour that is the essence of passionate spirituality. The most individual of the eight quality characteristics of natural church development, passionate spirituality reflects a growing, personal relationship with

joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer."

Passionate spirituality is the outflow of a genuine relationship with Jesus. All other life events and relationships are infused with new meaning and purpose because of this relationship with Jesus. Ministry flows naturally from a desire to serve him. Evangelism springs from the impossibility of keeping "such priceless stuff to yourself."

Not surprisingly, Christian Schwarz found that, in churches where people learn to live their faith with "contagious enthusiasm," growth in both quality and quantity is experienced.

Transcending style and denomination, passion ignites everything that takes place. More than simply "doing church," or even faithfully practising spiritual disciplines, passion for Jesus infuses life into these activities. Prayer

and Bible study become exciting opportunities to encounter God personally.

Spiritual passion determines what we bring to the group. Understanding this, discerning leaders intentionally strive to cultivate times of spiritual emphasis

when individual passion for Jesus is nurtured. Passionate spirituality means remaining faithful to Jesus Christ and staying the course. Even through tough times of affliction, a person who is passionate about Jesus Christ will experi-

ence a deepening and increasingly meaningful relationship with him.

Let's return to our earlier narrative. Setting his cane down, he adjusts his hearing aid. Not wanting to miss a single word, they sit close, bending their

heads toward each other. The 60 years together is evident as their actions and words flow from their deep understanding of each other and their ever-deepening love. Thinking back, they always marvel that their conversation is so stimulating and challenging. Throughout the years, this has been their anchor relationship. Purpose in life still seems focused on discovering more about each other.

Passionate spirituality is contagious. Without it, church is merely another activity. With it, the church is potent, drawing the world into a relationship to Jesus Christ. **R**

John Baergen is executive director and chief executive officer of the International Centre for Leadership Development and Evangelism in Winfield, B.C.; 1-800-804-0777.

**More than simply
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or even faithfully
practising spiritual disciplines,
passion for Jesus
infuses life into these activities**

Christ flowing from a genuine belief that God desires us to know him intimately and wants to reveal himself to us. The Apostle Paul writes in Romans 12:11-12: "Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord. Be

For Discussion and Reflection

by Jim Czegledi

If you talk to someone about spirituality, what comes to mind may be an image of a monk living on a mountaintop, contemplating the mysteries of life. But everyone has a spiritual life, whether admitted or not. We all have the capacity to perceive things beyond our immediate understanding. Our lives are often marked by our yearning to reach beyond ourselves.

Spirituality has been defined as referring to those things that relate to the immaterial, non-worldly parts of human existence. Spirituality is what we think and do in our efforts to connect with God through Christ. It reflects, as John Baergen suggests, our growing personal relationship with Christ. According to Christian Schwarz, the significance of spirituality is not the way it is expressed but how it is lived — with commitment, passion and enthusiasm.

The problem is that too few people are passionate. Lack of passion —

apathy — is an obstacle to church growth. The key to having church growth and health is a positive congregational climate where members will be enthusiastic enough to invite others. Nothing is more contagious than enthusiasm. Studies show that between 75 per cent and 90 per cent of people attend church for the first time as the result of an invitation from a friend.

Passion motivates us. The Bible uses the term "heart" to describe what determines our words, feelings and actions. Heart is another word for passion. The problem in the church is that people often misplace or repress their passion. It often focuses on the wrong things. Healthy, growing congregations centre their passion on ministry and mission. The key is to be positive and focused.

Passionate spirituality is expressed in a positive congregational climate. This happens when the church has a warm, welcoming and friendly pres-

ence. A sense of excitement and expectation exists. The leaders present a message that emphasizes hope and forgiveness as well as responsibility.

- How do you define spirituality?
- What are you passionate about?
- What is positive about your congregation?
- Are you warm, welcoming and friendly?
- If not, how can you grow in these areas?

For further reading on the subject of spirituality:

Discover Your Spiritual Type by Corrinne Ware (The Alban Institute, 1995)

Reformed Spirituality by Howard Rice (Westminster/John Knox, 1991)

Jim Czegledi is associate secretary of evangelism, church growth and worship of the Life and Mission Agency of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.

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Faces of Faith



Clara Henderson was born in Walkerton, Ontario, but spent most of her childhood in Woodstock, Ontario. She studied fine arts at York University, Toronto, concentrating on music, visual arts and dance. At York, she developed a strong interest in South Indian classical singing and drumming and in the music of Africa, especially through her partic-

ipation in a Ghanaian drumming ensemble.

In 1981, she joined the overseas staff of The Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCC). At the request of the Blantyre Synod of the Church of Central Africa Presbyterian, she travelled to Malawi in February 1982 to work with them in all aspects of church music. For 11 years, she and her Malawian colleagues implemented a program that focuses on encouraging the development and growth of indigenous Malawian music for worship.

In 1995, after a two-year study leave at Indiana University (Bloomington), Clara obtained a master's degree in ethnomusicology. On her return to Malawi the same year, she was assigned the task of synod music consultant. Clara also teaches weekly music lessons at Zomba Theological College, coordinates workshops on composition and liturgy renewal at Chilema Ecumenical Training and Conference Centre, and is assisting the women's department in compiling a song-book.

What is your earliest memory of church life?

The dimmed lighting of evening services, the distinct melodies of evening hymns, the comfort of snuggling up against my mom's fur coat, and the treat of eating dry Fruit Loops to keep me quiet (I was brought up on oatmeal porridge so Fruit Loops were special)

What is your favourite hymn?

"The Day Thou Gavest, Lord, is Ended" and "Will You Come and Follow Me?"

What musical piece most inspired you?

There have been too many to isolate only one, but the record my mom had of the Robert Shaw Chorale singing Negro spirituals significantly influenced me as a child to go in search of religious music that moved me and whose rhythms made me want to dance

Where do you find inspiration to sustain your faith?

In contemporary, black gospel music — the Winans, John P. Kee, Kirk Franklin, Yolanda Adams ... and in Malawian hymns with traditional Malawian tunes

If you could invite anyone (past or present) to a dinner party, whom would you invite?

I would love to bring together in one place all my friends who are scattered throughout the world and have a big outdoor barbecue with great food and dancing to live music — preferably a contemporary African band

What has been your greatest joy?

Working daily with music that I love (African/Malawian music) in the context of a spiritual/religious environment

Which book do you wish you had written?

Well, assuming one thoroughly understands what one has written, then I would say the book of Romans, especially Chapter 8, because I would like to know it well enough for it to be completely internalized. In terms of novels, James Baldwin's *Another Country* or Ralph Ellison's *The Invisible Man*. In terms of ethnographies, Lawrence Levine's *Black Culture and Black Consciousness*

Do you have any unusual work habits or superstitions?

I'm still trying to develop work habits ... My play habits are more advanced. Superstitions? No

How do you relax?

In Malawi, I play tennis or squash almost every day. I love hiking on Mulanje Mountain and the Zomba Plateau or swimming at Lake Malawi. In Canada, I relax at our family cottage at Bruce Beach on Lake Huron. In both countries, I like to go out dancing — especially to popular African music

What is your favourite quotation?

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, says the LORD." What I like about this quote is that it humbles me by reminding me of my finite nature and the limitations of my logic

What question are you asked most often?

In Malawi, other expatriates are always asking, "How long did it take you to learn Chichewa [one of Malawi's national languages]?" Malawians are always asking me, "Are you married?" No. "Why not?" Despite the number of times I have been asked, I have never come up with a satisfactory answer to either question. There is no point at which I can say I learned Chichewa because I am still learning it. As for the question of marriage, I can always borrow from one of my father's jokes and use the retort, "I'd rather spend the rest of my life wishing I had something I didn't than wishing I didn't have something I did!"

Who or what disturbs you?

Expatriates who come to live and work in Malawi but who are not interested in participating in or learning anything about Malawians or Malawian culture. When these people become frustrated by their jobs or by their workmates, Malawians are the ones to bear the brunt of their dissatisfaction. In the end, these disgruntled expatriates make sweeping negative generalizations about Malawians and Malawian culture based solely on their own narrow and uninformed perspective of the situation

Who is the most interesting person you have ever met? Why?

To me, an interesting person is someone whose life successfully balances spiritual, physical, intellectual and creative activity. Someone who does a pretty good job of keeping active in all four areas is my sister, Marg. Another is artist/PCC minister Ruth MacLean. Another is musician Bruce Cockburn (although I don't know how physically active he is, he seems pretty fit creatively, spiritually and intellectually — but, then, I've never met him so maybe that doesn't count ...). King David from the Bible would be another good example

What's the best advice your parents ever gave you?

My parents' advice came more in the form of the examples they set for me that equipped me for living a full life. From my father's example, I learned to pray daily, to love nature and to look at all people and situations in a positive light and with a sense of humour. From my mother's example, I learned to be creative, to love music, cooking and sharing meals with others and, especially, how to love people

What piece of music do you wish you had written?

Anything by Bach or Stevie Wonder

Write your own epitaph.

With joy and love, she lived a life rich in spiritual, physical, creative and intellectual activity



Guideposts

Celebrating Our Heritage



Photo G-2266-FC courtesy of Presbyterian Church Archives

Lillian and James Dickson served for many years in Taiwan, beginning in the 1930s. James served as principal of the Taiwan Theological College. Lillian established the Mustard Seed organization that works with children, many of whom were orphans. The photograph shows Tyal girls with Lillian Dickson in the Dicksons' home in Taiwan at Christmas.



"Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." 2 CORINTHIANS 9:7



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PCC News

Synod of Toronto and Kingston: attendance at camps booms

Commissioners attending the Synod of Toronto and Kingston meeting in the Toronto Korean Presbyterian Church on October 13 and 14 heard that the number of those attending synod camps is increasing. Campers at Glen Mohr Camp, located near Baysville, increased 21 per cent from 440 in 1998 to 534 in 1999. Since hiring directors Beth Blake and Travis Allison three years ago, the number of campers has increased by 44.3 per cent.

In 1998, Camp Iona, near Bala, expanded its age range to include six- to eight-year-olds. Campers in this range more than doubled in 1999.

After eight years of inactivity, Dorothy Lake Camp in Northern Ontario was reopened, with two one-week camps and one weekend camp. These family events drew more than 100 campers.

The synod operates two music camps at rented facilities: Wesley Acres and Music Camp Muskoka. Wesley Acres had its full complement of 160 registrations by the end of February.

For the second year in a row, the synod carried out the bulk of its business working in small groups under the leadership of Chuck Olsen, a consultant from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Music and prayer were interspersed throughout

the business. Table groups prioritized the business and attempted to operate on a consensus model.

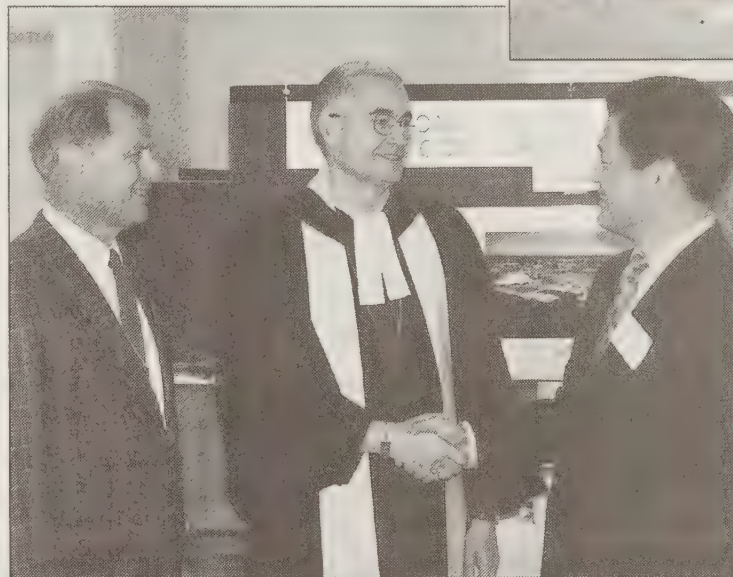
Synod met in the newly constructed facilities of the Toronto Korean Presbyterian Church. A highlight of the synod worship service was the participation of Korean-speaking women members who served Communion — the first time this has happened in the 32-year history of the congregation.

Rev. David Jack of Sault Ste. Marie was elected moderator. The synod will meet in his home city next year. Repre-

sentatives from Sault Ste. Marie had a display at synod and made a spirited presentation urging commissioners to come to the city in 2000.



Top: Toronto Korean Presbyterian Church, site of the Synod of Toronto and Kingston meeting.



Left: (L to R) Rev. Chuck Olsen, consultant from the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); Rev. David Jack, moderator of the Synod of Toronto Kingston; Rev. Cheol Soon Park, minister of the host church.

St. Andrew's Hall launches Institute for Elders Education

In 1888, James Croil, then editor of the *Presbyterian Record*, was commissioned by the Alliance of Reformed Churches holding the Presbyterian and Congregational systems to do a study on the eldership and its practice. Twenty-six members of the alliance replied to Croil's survey. He concluded the church needed to do something more serious in eldership training.

Brian Fraser, dean of St Andrew's Hall, maintains the church still has not done a serious job of eldership training, and it won't until some kind of agency devoted to this cause is established. Therefore, St. Andrew's Hall

has taken the first step "to identify, fund, and develop a series of tools and courses that will improve the ability of elders to govern the church faithfully, effectively, and wisely." The second step is to launch a three-year pilot project costing approximately \$130,000 per year. Agencies, congregations and individuals across the church are being contacted to contribute to the Founder's Fund for the institute. By March 2000, St. Andrew's Hall hopes to contract a director, a co-ordinator of Internet education and an administrative assistant for the three-year project. Courses will be offered primarily over

the Internet. Several are being developed, including "Hope and Hospitality: A Fresh Look at Evangelism for Presbyterian Elders" and "Teach Us to Pray."

Fraser emphasizes that plans for the institute "are evolving in terms of needs that are uncovered and the desires of elders." He points out there is a built-in constituency for this program in a church that already has more than 13,000 elders — "all lifelong learners by virtue of their ordination vows."

For more information about the institute, contact Brian Fraser at (604) 822-9721 or at fraser@standrews.edu.

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NEWS

FLAMES international tours co-ordinator appointed

Sarah Hoag, a member of Rosedale Church, Toronto, has been appointed to co-ordinate nine FLAMES tours planned for 2000 and 2001. Noting that Presbyterians often choose far away places with strange sounding names, Sarah has announced tentative dates for the first four tours in spring 2000: Japan (led by Beth McIntosh) and Taiwan (led by Jack and Betty Geddes) April 4-19; The Holy Land - Israel, Gaza and the West Bank (led by Marjorie Ross) May 2-17; Eastern Europe - Hungary, Romania and Ukraine (led by David Pandy-Szekeres) May 3-18; Kenya (led by Ian Clark) and Malawi (led by Linda Inglis) May 14-29. Estimated costs range from \$2,000 to \$3,200.

Sarah has this advice for prospective travellers: "Our tours are a good way to

see another part of the world and to experience Presbyterian efforts at work. But this isn't fancy tourism. You will be housed in basic accommodations, and costs will be kept as low as we can manage. As you travel, you will learn about the countries, their people and the work of Presbyterian missions and other groups. And you will become a spokesperson for our mission work when you discuss your experiences with your home congregation."

Three tours are also planned for fall 2000: India, Guatemala and El Salvador, Mozambique and Malawi. Two tours are scheduled for spring 2001: India and Nepal, Costa Rica and Nicaragua. For more information, contact Sarah Hoag at (416) 441-1111, ext. 249 or at shoag@presbyterian.ca.

Presbyterian group in fourth year of singing Good News

Three years ago, four people from St. Andrew's Church, Perth, Ontario, got together for some informal music-making. Out of that first informal session came The Good News Company, a quartet with a busy schedule that includes singing at church services and church suppers, and also at seniors homes, cancer benefits, social gatherings and community events throughout the area.

The quartet's members — Linda Silver, lead vocals and guitar; Rev. Larry Paul (minister of St. Andrew's), keyboard, guitar, vocals; Graeme Crabb, keyboard and guitar, vocals; Gail Wren, vocals — prefer not to be labelled with a particular musical style. The Good News Company is as likely to perform something from The Rankin Family, Susan Aglukark or Prairie Oyster as it is to sing gospel music. When asked to do completely secular programs, the

group will try to include a song or two with a Christian message.

Not content to perform the same songs at each concert, The Good News Company is always searching for fresh material, favouring songs that are lively and upbeat. In the meantime, they continue to juggle their work schedules so they can "bring smiles, gladden hearts and share songs with a Christian message."



The Good News Company: (L to R) Graeme Crabb, Gail Wren, Larry Paul and Linda Silver.

Other News

They plowed the fields and gathered at international plowing match

More than 3,500 people filled the Zurich [Ontario] arena, the community hall and the picnic tables outside the arena for the worship service opening the 1999 International Plowing Match on September 19. The guest preacher for the evening service was Huron County native Paul Henderson, best known for his goal in the 1972 Canada-Russia hockey series. Worship was led by nine young adults (none of whom had been born when Henderson scored his goal) from the nine denominations that planned the service.

A 300-voice choir set the tone with a joyful performance of Don Besig's "Praise God." The rural roots of Huron County and the focus of the plowing match were acknowledged as the congregation declared "We plow the fields and scatter the good seed on the land," and the choir sang "Is this not the land of

Beulah?" The arena was decorated with 60 banners from congregations around Perth County. The proceeds from the offering went to the Canadian Foodgrains Bank to assist in its work of feeding the hungry of the world — a mission close to the hearts of farmers.

The plowing match and farm show ran from September 21-25. The plowing covered 1,000 hectares north of Dashwood, Ontario. The tent city that housed hundreds of displays, exhibits, retail and food booths covered 40 hectares.

Among the booths was a hospitality tent sponsored jointly by the Rural Ministry Committee of the Synod of Southwestern Ontario of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and the Christian Reformed Churches of Huron County. Along with hospitality (including free coffee, juice, cookies and muffins), the

tent offered information and displays about such topics as children's and youth ministry, and congregational life and outreach. There was also material from the parish nursing programs of Knox Church, Goderich, and Melville Church, Brussels, Ontario, and displays by the Canadian Bible Society and the Canadian Foodgrains Bank.

The joint Presbyterian-Reformed tent was not the only Christian presence at the plowing match. The Lutheran Church in Canada and Gospel Halls also had tents. Child Evangelism Fellowship featured clowns, face-painting and a puppet show. The Gideons and the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario had displays in the commercial tents. A number of church groups operated food booths or offered country-style meals in the community hall. *(From a report by Peter Bush)*

Church council tackles debt crisis

The Caribbean and North American Area Council (CANAAC) of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches held a conference on the theme "The Debt Crisis: Owning the Problem and Sharing the Solution," October 20-24, in St. Mary, Jamaica. The Presbyterian Church in Canada was well-represented by official delegates Rev. Paulette Brown, Rev. Terry Hastings and Rev. Helen Smith. Also attending were Dorcas Gordon, principal of Knox College, who gave a paper on faith and economics; Art Van Seters, Moderator of the 125th General Assembly, who took part in a panel discussion; and John McFarlane, treasurer of CANAAC.

At the end of the conference, the council issued a message in which it appealed to creditor nations, banks, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and other financial institutions to cancel the debts of heavily indebted poor countries in the year 2000. "We have come to understand that the roots of the international debt crisis are tangled, and blame may be widely

shared on every side," the message stated. It also went on to say that there is a temptation for Christians to remain silent when faced with financial complexities. However, "for Christians, silence in the face of suffering is not an option."

The message invited CANAAC members (18 denominations representing seven million people in nine countries) to participate in the Jubilee 2000 movement as a first step toward solving the debt crisis.

CANAAC recognizes that "many additional steps and negotiations will be necessary to prevent recurrences of the failed policies and practices that conspired to create the current crisis." As a next step, the council is calling for the lifting of the United States embargo on Cuba.

"Our ultimate goal is not debt cancellation, but world-wide economic justice," the message stated. "Cancelling the debt is only a beginning. But, for the sake of oppressed human beings in indebted nations, we must begin."

Food shortages in North Korea still serious

While North Koreans are making small inroads to feeding themselves, food needs there are still serious, say a Canadian couple who lived in the isolated country for two years. Erich and Marilyn Weingartner, who returned to Canada in July, were the first Canadians given resident status in North Korea since the Korean War. Erich worked as founding head of the Food Aid Liaison Unit (FALU) of the United Nations World Food Program. The FALU office monitored the distribution of food aid coming from a number of international aid agencies, including the Canadian Foodgrains Bank (CFGB).

World eyes turned to Korea in 1995 after massive flooding there. But when the international aid agencies were allowed into the country, they found much deeper problems, including a crumbling infrastructure and economic system. The Weingartners, who are from North Bay, Ontario, describe a country still in decay. They saw a resurgence of diseases such

(Continues)

News Scan

as cholera and a shortage of basic medical supplies and medicines. A comprehensive nutritional survey, in which Marilyn, a health care professional, participated in 1998, found 16 per cent of children acutely malnourished.

Since 1996, the 13 church-based agencies, including Presbyterian World Service and Development, that hold membership in the Canadian Foodgrains Bank have provided more than \$20 million worth of rice, wheat, oil and peas to North Korea. Most of that assistance has been shipped directly from Canada. CFGB has also provided an additional \$350,000 in seeds, pesticides, fertilizers and equipment.

The Weingartners believe strongly that, even with North Korea's repressive government, food aid must continue. "Food aid definitely saves lives in North Korea," Marilyn says. "But food aid does more than that. Food aid opens the door to dialogue, to trust, to friendship."

PWS&D appointment

Presbyterian World Service and Development has announced the appointment of Monica John as administrative assistant. She takes over the position from Elza Furzer, who was recently appointed senior administrator and assistant to the chief financial officer in the Financial Services department.

Blessed are the poor in spirit?

The Church Council on Justice and Corrections (CCJC) has condemned the Ontario government's "law and order" crackdown on squeegee persons and panhandlers, calling it a recipe for more crime, more fears and less safe places to live because it further divides communities and people into "us-and-them worlds." The CCJC believes nuisance laws that criminalize what some people perceive to be annoying actions are not a meaningful, effective response. The presence of squeegee people and panhandlers points to deeper social ills that must be addressed by government, churches and all citizens, the CCJC contends.

Are you listening, Martin?

On October 31, 482 years to the day after Martin Luther set the Reformation in motion when he nailed his 95 theses to a church door, Lutherans and Roman Catholics have solemnly declared that mutual condemnations from the Reformation era no longer apply. According to a joint declaration signed by leaders from both denominations, there is now "a consensus in basic truths" between Lutherans and Roman Catholics on the doctrine of justification — one of the most contentious issues that divided Luther and his followers from the papacy. (ENI)

A bishop-driven economy

Some Church of England bishops are paying their chauffeurs almost as much as a typical parish priest earns. According to figures leaked to the *Sunday Telegraph* newspaper in London, the five highest-spending bishops, who were not named, paid their drivers an average salary of 15,133 pounds sterling (\$24,820 US). The typical Church of England parish priest's stipend is 15,750 pounds sterling (\$25,830 US).



In the bleak mid-winter, frosty wind made moan

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The Many Branches of a Tree

Perry and Heather Wilkinson

Two years ago, the congregation of Knox Church, Walkerton, Ontario, planted a seed or, rather, a seedling. In search of a Christmas outreach program for people without a church home, and for those whose hearts are particularly vulnerable during the Christmas season, the congregation sent two small groups to scout out the "Living Christmas Tree" ministries of Bethel Pentecostal Church, Wallaceburg, and First Presbyterian Church, Collingwood. The scouts must have been inspired by what they found for, from that point on, Knox's own living tree ministry experienced remarkable growth.

The congregation quickly demonstrated it had a green thumb. In April 1998, the session provided \$10,000 in seed money from the endowment of Helen Singer. The project became known henceforth (harmoniously enough) as the Singer Christmas Tree.

Now it was time for the promotion and fund-raising to take root. This was accomplished in a variety of creative ways, and the tree grew in strength month by month. August featured a corn roast and "sneak preview." September included a strawberry/elderberry shortcake party and a "Save Your Coins" promotion, with a weigh-in to determine the heaviest piggy bank. In October, a car rally gave participants the opportunity to take in some fall scenery on the roads of Bruce County. A community soup-luncheon proved a great success in the

chilly air of November. Last, but not least, a capacity crowd filled the church hall for a "Première Banquet" in December. And, while all these events were taking place, people were donating many of the 7,000 lights on the tree in honour of special loved ones (whose names were printed in the bulletins for each of the presentations).

How a Living Christmas Tree became the symbol of a living faith

The Singer Christmas Tree grew with the diligent work of seven committees: structure, lighting, décor, music, sound, tickets/advertising and food. Each of the committees called on members and adherents of the congregation as well as interested individ-

uals from the community to help. The attention to detail paid off: all 350 tickets for each of the four performances on December 11, 13, 14 and 15 were sold out by December 5.

In the end, there was a six-level, 7.5-metre tree, a 60-voice adult choir and a 45-voice children's choir. In keeping with the high standards of the presentation, a new Pramberger Young Chang grand piano and a three-manual Wurlitzer organ were used for the accompaniment.

The presentations were not without a few hiccups — a guest trumpeter was stranded with a broken down car and an organist discovered leather organ shoes plus a frosty deck equals one broken arm. But the hiccup the ushers experienced accommodating the many people without tickets for the final performance was (once it was over) a welcome one, a sign of the project's overwhelming success.

The Singer Christmas Tree grew because of the strength of its many branches — the people directly involved with the presentation and also the parking attendants, greeters, ushers, elevator operators, coffee hour hosts, offering counters, custodian, and all the other branches often

not "seen for the tree." In the end, it was not only the community that felt the warmth and splendour of the Singer Christmas Tree but the congregation of Knox, Walkerton, as well. **R**



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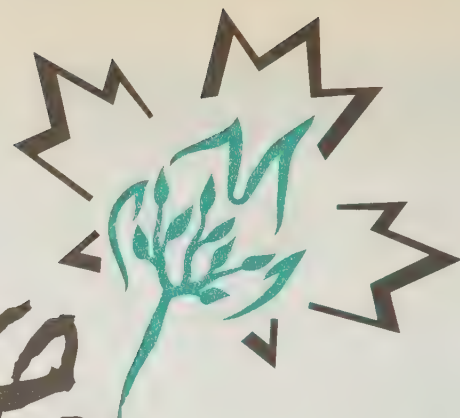
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The **Singer Christmas Tree** will be presented December 11, 12, 13 and 14 at Knox Church, Walkerton, Ontario.

The 19th annual **Living Christmas Tree** of First Church, Collingwood, Ontario, will be presented December 12 (two performances), 13 and 14.

Celebrate.



Let's Start Our Third Millennium Together!

Together 2000, a joint project of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada and the Canadian Council of Churches, invites Christians across Canada to plan an extraordinary Christmas-carolling event in their communities December 17-19, 1999, to begin the celebration of the 2000th anniversary of Jesus' birth.

Among other suggestions is, at noon local time on January 1, all church bells in Canada be rung for five minutes in honour of the 2000th anniversary of the incarnation of Jesus Christ. Churches without bells could choose some other way to "make a joyful noise unto the Lord" at the same moment: think of combined choirs singing at noon on January 1, aboriginal drums or steel bands, handbells and wind chimes ...

On the first Sunday of the new millennium, Together 2000 encourages all Christian churches in Canada to include common elements in their worship. Consider reading one or more of: Isaiah 60:1-6, Psalm 72, Hebrews 11:8-10; Matthew 2:1-12; Mark 1:1-8. Sing "The First Nowell," "I Am the Light of the World" or "Joy to the World." Include a short responsory prayer available on the Web site (www.together2000.org).

Celebrate! Day in Cornwall

St. John's Church, Cornwall, Ontario, began its 18-month celebration of the 125th year of The Presbyterian Church in Canada and the arrival of a new millennium on Sunday, June 20, 1999. It combined an outdoor celebration of worship with the annual congregational picnic.

The site was the Lost Villages Museum, a memorial consisting of buildings and exhibits dedicated to communities flooded or relocated because of the opening of the St. Lawrence Seaway in 1959. The area provided a natural amphitheatre with a rolling hillside protected by century-old shade trees.

The service began with an appropriate proclamation by

Weston Libbey, Cornwall's official town crier. It included a unison prayer from Calvin's Liturgy (1542) and a thanksgiving liturgy for Communion translated from the ancient Communion prayer of Hippolytus of Rome (c. AD 215). The Communion table was constructed from wood removed from the church roof last December when damage by the ice storm of January 1998 was repaired.

Following the service, the congregation planted a spruce tree and dedicated it to the glory of God as an enduring remembrance of the *Celebrate! Day*. The tree will grow to become the Lost Villages Museum's Christmas tree, a symbol of our past and our future in Christ. The day ended with an old-fashioned picnic and games. (Contributed by Susanne Matthews)

Celebrate! Float

First Church, Kenora, Ontario, plans to enter a *Celebrate!* float in the Santa Claus Parade. Other millennium activities include a spring choir concert, walk-ride-a-thon for charity, millennium tea and the creation of a banner/quilt.

Soynica Project

Soynica is a Nicaraguan, non-governmental organization that seeks to improve the quality of life for impoverished Nicaraguan families through practical education in health, nutrition and agriculture. Hope-dale congregation in Oakville, Ontario, has identified this project as the number one priority in its millennium celebrations. Members plan to raise at least \$10,000 for this project.

They also plan to erect a new sign for the church that will have the capacity to display a variety of images. For the 125th anniversary of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, they are producing lapel and tie pins.

Let the Record share your plans for the millennium with the rest of the church. R



Planting the *Celebrate! Day* tree. The eldest and the youngest of St. John's Church, Cornwall, Ont., assist Rev. Fred Rennie.



Dying for an Answer

Important questions

On the eve of this millennium, predictions and prophecies about the future abound. I have a couple of predictions to make, too, about the future of our organization and the role The Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCC) will play in the next century.

This prediction is fairly easy to make and quite uncomplicated. The Presbyterian Church in Canada will die. A couple of individual congregations may survive on their own. The rest — unless something drastic changes — will dwindle away to a few grey heads in the back pews and, then, to many empty buildings.

I am usually an optimist; but the most incurable optimist could not look at the statistics from a study done by the PCC last year without drawing the same conclusion. There are 985 Presbyterian churches in Canada. Of these, 171 are too small or too old to have any church school program whatsoever. Of the rest, 90 per cent have church schools with fewer than 25 kids enrolled. Nearly half of those with any program at all (364 churches) have fewer than 20 kids — which means there are less than 10 children attending on an average Sunday.

We are dying, friends. When this generation dies, there is no other to take its place in our pews.

I worry about the future even at churches that are doing well. I'm pleased to say my home church, Knox Waterloo, Ontario, came third in Canada with more than 200 children in church school. We have one of the most active congregations I have ever seen in terms of adults contributing to church school, Logos, and other Christian education programs. Yet, by the end of October this year, we still didn't have a senior high group be-



cause no one volunteered to lead it. We had teenagers who were eager to attend; but, apparently, no leaders thought youth were important enough to give an hour a week to lead the group.

I have a question for every *Record* reader: *Is it important that the youth of today go to church and grow up knowing God?* The message you are sending is that it is not.

If you answered yes, it is important, think long and hard about how important it is to you. The message teens and children are getting is that church is important, but:

- Not important enough to go myself even though I send my kids
- Not important enough to give an hour or so a week to teach church school or to lead a youth group
- Not important enough to change the music or atmosphere to something teens would find more comfortable
- Not important enough for me to develop a personal relationship with every teen who lives in the area of my church
- Not important enough for me to bother finding out what teens these days are concerned about
- Not important enough for me to organize and sponsor an event or activity that teens would enjoy
- Not important enough for us to offer the church building as an ideal place to

for a dying church

hold a dance, a sleepover or an activities centre

- Not important enough for us to revamp our entire philosophy and program to meet the needs of this generation.

Do you care that The Presbyterian Church in Canada is dying? Are we all resigned to the inevitable — to doing no more than making the days of our elderly institution as comfortable as we can, caring for it tenderly until death arrives? Are our traditions and dogmas so important to us that we would rather see them die than modify them or adapt them? Is this death a good thing, since we obviously have nothing left to offer to this generation?

I pray to God that the children and youth of today are finding God and spiritual solace somewhere because they're not finding it in our churches. And as far as I can tell, that is not going to change in the next millennium. **R**

*I would like to thank everyone who has written or e-mailed me over the years I was writing this column. I have learned a lot from you; a couple of you have posed tough enough questions that completely changed the way I thought about something. Thanks also to John Congram and the **Record** for being willing to print controversial — even heretical — opinions in the spirit of debate and with the knowledge that disturbing questions must be asked (if not always answered) on the journey of faith.*

This is Kathy Cawsey's last column for Generation Y. She is working in Waterloo, Ontario, until February when she will teach for a term at Lajos Kossuth University in Debrecen, Hungary. E-mail Kathy at kcawsey@hotmail.com.



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FROM THE MODERATOR

(Continued from page 4)

human control can lead to domestic upheaval, even violence. Yes, church groups could provide assistance not only for congregational members but also for those outside the church. Newspaper ads could get the word out. A petition might be circulated like the Jubilee petition — no, as a Jubilee petition! These and e-mails could be sent to presbyteries and other church bodies, as well as to provincial and federal politicians. I wondered aloud about using the Presbyterian Web page and, certainly, the *Record*, which had excellent articles on Ontario hog farming in last April's issue. Churches could be strategically important in fostering a caring attitude and response.

Naturally, this got me thinking again about our biblical understanding of Jubilee.

The starting point for understanding the Jubilee tradition is the Bible's view of land as a gift from God and of ourselves as stewards rather than owners. The land is given to sustain life and to meet human need as well as the needs of other creatures. In Leviticus 25, the restoration of land to the original inheritors is designed to ensure that *everyone's* need can be met. Soil conditions, climatic patterns and many other factors affect land use and transactions. Agricultural communities know how important it is to work together.

Why can a country like ours not find ways of giving mutual support in this gradually developing crisis as we do in cases of massive floods, ice storms and earthquakes? As a Canadian church, we need both to give pastoral support and to provide an Advent vision of an alternative (Jubilee) way of sharing. This Christmas, will the farmers, like the shepherds of long ago, finally hear good news?

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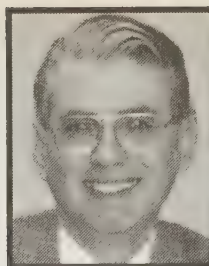
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Putting Checks on the Balances

An anonymous donor gave \$10,000 to our congregation for a new sound system. It was late in the year, so the money was not spent. At the annual congregational meeting, I noted the \$10,000 had been entered as an item of income as well as an expense in the financial statements even though not a penny of that money had been spent. Is this legal? Is this proper?

Ah, the world of accounting and financial statements! I guess there are all sorts of intriguing accounting practices that are legal but may not be all that reflective of what precisely happens.

I, too, would ask why this \$10,000 was not put in a special fund as a "carry over" from the previous year to be used to buy the sound system in the future. However, you tell me an accountant assured you this procedure is legal. Who am I to argue? I am not an accountant. As long as the money is available to spend for its intended purpose, I would not "sweat it" too much.

For me, there is another more significant issue that arises out of your question. It has to do with monies donated to a congregation for purposes the congregation may not consider pressing. For instance, someone in the congregation may decide that, despite other more immediate and urgent needs, the church pews need to be padded. Now, that is a worthy goal, especially in congregations deprived of such comfort and in which the average age of the membership is climbing! The intention of the donor is beyond reproach; yet, it deprives the session, board and congregation of the flexibility

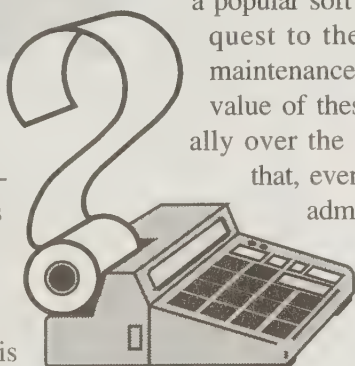
required to administer the church's finances as they deem best. I believe gifts and bequests should seldom be so narrowly defined as to deprive the congregation and those charged with administering the church's affairs from having such flexibility.

I recall the story, perhaps apocryphal, about a church somewhere in Canada. In the early years of this century, someone gave a considerable number of shares of a popular soft drink company as a bequest to the congregation for the maintenance of the pipe organ. The value of these shares rose dramatically over the decades with the result that, eventually, the congregation administered a multimillion-dollar organ fund! Yet, at the same time, the roof needed repair, the congregation needed extra staff and so forth.

But all the money was legally tied up for the care and nurture of the pipe organ. I am a great pipe organ fan, but not *that* much of a fan!

It is always appreciated by the session and board of the congregation I serve when members who wish to make a "special donation" enquire where such a donation would fit most helpfully in the congregation's overall plans for the year. In fact, at our last congregational meeting, we drew up a priority list of five "special projects" to be paid for "when funds come available," some of those monies coming from the general budget and some from special gifts. As a result, we have redone the nursery floor and put a sprinkler system in the gardens, much to the delight of our volunteer gardeners. ■

Please send questions for Rev. Tony Plomp to Tony_Plomp@telus.net or 4020 Lancelot Dr., Richmond, B.C. V7C 4S3.



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75th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

PEOPLE & PLACES

THE CHURCH SCHOOL of St. Andrew's Church, King City, Ont., led the worship service on June 13, during which the congregation presented a farewell gift to its interim student minister, Wendy Lampman. Pictured (L to R) with members of the church school are: superintendent Bonnie Lea Mooney, Glenn and Wendy Lampman, and clerk of session Jim Agnew.



THE CONGREGATION OF West Vancouver Church presented Ian and Cathy Victor with a farewell gift — an original oil painting by local artist Michael Tickner (right). Ian was minister of West Vancouver for 10 years (August 1989 - June 1999) before moving to St. Giles Church, Ottawa. Cathy is minister of St. Andrew's Church, Kars, and Osgoode Church, Vernon, Ont.

THE CONGREGATION OF St. Andrew's Church, Kirkfield, Ont., presented Rita Ewen with a plaque in appreciation for her more than 65 years in the church choir. She also received an Honorary WMS Life Membership for her active participation since 1940. Making the presentations were Rev. John Ufkes and Barbara Stanton.



REV. ZANDER AND NANCY DUNN were toasted and roasted at a gala dinner and evening of entertainment on the occasion of Zander's retirement from Knox Church, Guelph, Ont. The evening included a number of humorous skits. In the one shown, Zander was made Moderator (a position he shunned during his ministry) and presented with orange vestments by former Moderator Linda Bell, while another former Moderator, John Congram, kisses the moderatorial ring.

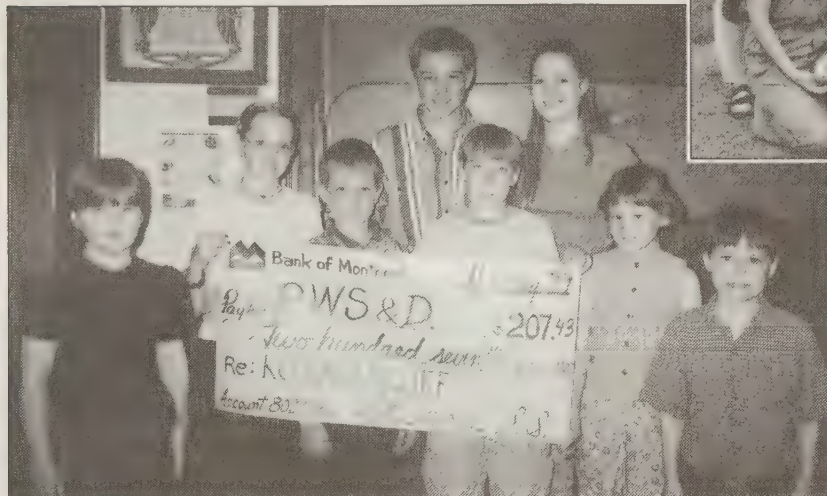
A CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION was presented to Henry Wegman for 28 years of service as clerk of session at the 190th anniversary service of Rockway Church, St. Catharines, Ont. The new clerk, Donna Bachur, is pictured presenting Henry with a gift.



Please note: Photos submitted for People & Places must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope if they are to be returned. Also, please try to ensure all pictures are clear and do not include a multitude of people. Colour or black-and-white photos are acceptable, but negatives and slides cannot be used. Thank you.

PEOPLE & PLACES

A VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL at St. Andrew's Church, Stittsville, Ont., with the theme "The Ultimate Adventure with Jesus" drew more than 50 children. Gathered on the final day are the teachers and helpers: (back row) Allison Hearn, Amy McEwing, Susan Oxner, Carrie Oxner, Rev. Steve Webb, Katie Webb, Patti Barrett and Anne Sturgeon; (front row) Nancy Thunem, Cheryl Westar, Shannon Hall, Chris Hinman.



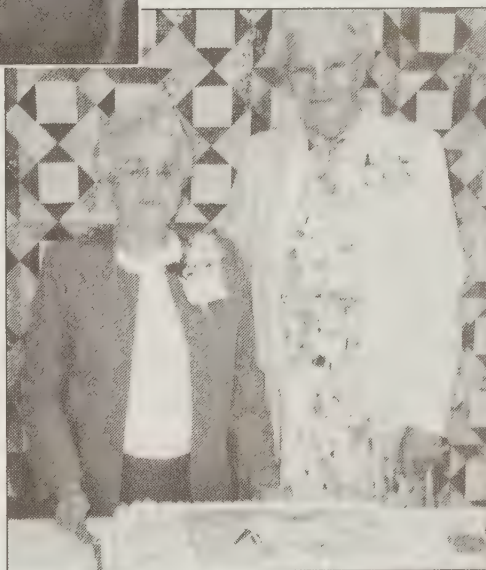
THE CHURCH SCHOOL OF St. James Church, Thamesville, Ont., served breakfast to members of the congregation on Mother's Day and raised \$207.43 for the Presbyterian World Service and Development Kosovo Relief Fund. Proudly displaying the cheque are: (L to R) Erin VanRooyen, Lauren Holmes, Brian VanRooyen, David Hubbell, Matthew Holmes, Elizabeth Hubbell, Jessica Malott and Kris VanRooyen.



CERTIFICATES MARKING 50 YEARS of association with Riverside Church, Windsor, Ont., were presented to Adeline Jenkins (left) and Ilene Russell by Rev. Rosemary Doran.



SHIRLEY F. MURDOCK receives a bouquet from Keith MacLennan of Knox Church, Indian Brook, Cape Breton, N.S., at a reception held by the Presbytery of Cape Breton to welcome her as diaconal minister to the North River and North Shore congregations.



THE CONGREGATION OF Thornhill Church, Thornhill, Ont., celebrated its 150th anniversary in 1999. The two senior members, Jean Smith (left) and Vera Martin, are shown about to cut the anniversary cake. Behind them is the congregation's anniversary signature quilt.



ON THE 45TH ANNIVERSARY of Wexford Church, Scarborough, Ont., a chairlift was dedicated in memory of former minister H. T. (Ted) Ellis. Trying the lift out is Nell Young.

PEOPLE & PLACES

"WHAT'S YOUR HURRY? LEAVE YOUR HAT" could have been the theme when the children of St. James Church, Chatham, Ont., collected sun hats for the summer programs of Flora House and the Anishinabe Fellowship in Winnipeg. Members of the congregation were encouraged to wear hats on "Hat Sunday" and, then, leave them behind after the worship service. More than 175 hats were collected — enough to share with some local programs.



WHEN THE COMMUNITY of Mt. Pleasant, Ont., celebrated its bicentennial with an ecumenical church service in July, Warren McKinnon, minister of Mt. Pleasant Church, took on the role of circuit preacher, arriving for the service on horseback. Fortunately, he was able leave with greater comfort in the end.



THE CONGREGATION OF Knox Church, Indian Brook, Cape Breton, N.S., celebrated its 142nd anniversary and the 50th anniversary of the current church building the weekend of July 16. The celebration began with a welcome back ceilidh on Friday, followed by a pioneer supper on Saturday. On Sunday, Rev. Glen Matheson of New Glasgow, N.S., returned to his home church as guest speaker. He is pictured with his mother, Madeline Matheson, a senior member of the congregation.

THE MODERATOR OF the 124th General Assembly, Rev. William Klempa (far right), had a taste of a northern winter when he visited the congregation of St. Andrew's Church, Thompson, Man., last February. On Mr. Klempa's right is Charles Cook, minister of St. Andrew's.



A VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL based on the VeggieTown values program was held at St. Paul's Church, Thornbury, Ont. A special feature was the construction site on which the children worked all week to build a church for VeggieTown. Pictured, some of the oldest of the 68 children constructing the church. The younger children later painted the church.

A BOOK SIGNING took place at Knox Church, Bayfield, Ont., when author Gwyneth Whilsmith introduced her new book of devotions, *I Know God's in Here Somewhere!* Watching her sign a copy of the book for Muriel Snider (right) are her daughter, JoAnne Payne, and grandson, Owen Payne.



Books for Christmas Giving

Reviewed by John Congram

Two regular contributors to the *Record* have produced new books.

David Webber is a minister of the Cariboo Presbyterian Church in the Kootenay region of southeastern British Columbia. He has brought together 28 of his stories under the title of one of them, **From Under a Blazing Aspen: Seeking Faith in the Back of Beyond** (Webber Ink, 2000, \$14). You will have read some of these stories in this magazine, but many are new. All of them arise out of David's experiences in the Kootenay, and most demonstrate his special sensitivity to the world of nature. All of them say something to David about God and human relationships and struggle. The stories are a delight! David published this book in celebration of 10 years of Presbyterian mission in the Cariboo.

Jim Taylor's newest book, **Precious Days and Practical Love: Caring for Your Aging Parent** (Northstone, 1999, \$19.95), will be welcomed by those who must deal with the changing relationships that occur when parents become aged. Along with much practical assistance, Jim weaves the story of his own beloved father, his decline and eventual death. Included throughout the book are brief vignettes from a variety of people who comment on the challenges of dealing with aging parents and the often difficult task of coping with a reversal of roles. This is a very helpful book, written in an honest and caring manner about a subject most of us must confront at some point in our lives.

Gifts for the Journey (St. Martin's Press, 1999, \$33.99) is the latest contribution from Scott Peck. This boxed set contains a book and two CDs. The book was previously published under the title *What Return Can I Make?* In the book, Peck talks about spiritual discovery and what he describes as the 12 core aspects of the Christian faith, including faith, vulnerability and conversion. On one CD, he collaborates with Carmelite Sister Marilyn von Waldner: she sings in the folk tradi-

tion and Peck offers reflections after each song. The other CD is made up completely of von Waldner's songs.

As the title suggests, **The Story of Christianity: A Celebration of 2,000 Years of Faith** (Oxford, 1999, \$35) tells the story of how the Christian faith grew into the world's most widely practised religion. This beautifully illustrated book would make an excellent addition to your coffee table collection. Michael Collins, a Roman Catholic, and Matthew Price, a Protestant, collaborated in writing the narrative that takes the reader from the roots of Christianity in the Old Testament to the question of where the Christian Church is going in the 21st century.

Twelve Tales for Christmas

by J. S. S. Armour, foreword by Stuart McLean, illustrations by Eva Ferenczy-Reichmann (*The Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul, Montreal*, 1999, \$20, plus \$5 shipping). Reviewed by Jean Morris.

Twelve Tales for Christmas is a collection of stories first delivered at the *CBC Radio Christmas Sing-In* by James S. S. Armour while he was minister of The Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul in Montreal. The stories draw on memories and anecdotes from Armour's Christmases shared with family and congregations. His wit and descriptive writing make the reader a participant in such varied contexts as a prairie pageant, with regrettable fistfights among the cherubs, to the serenity of Christmas letters written and received with love.

These stories awaken readers to personal memories of Christmases past, and the senses come alive with smells of roasting turkey, the lights of trees and wreaths, and the sounds of bells and chil-

dren's choirs. The recalling of Christmas Eve events of reverent community worship and household horrors of the late-night assembly of toys brings the divine and mundane together in a way that speaks to the experiences of all of us.

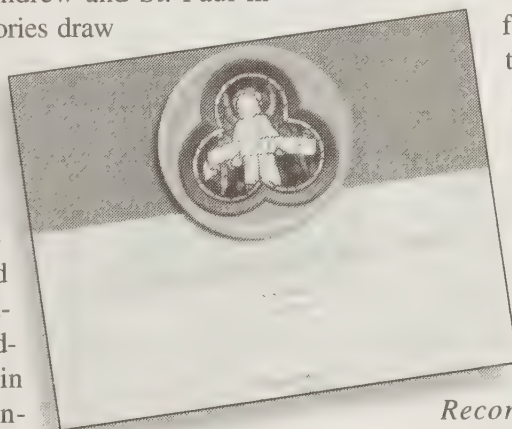
Twelve Tales for Christmas will appeal to all ages. The characters range from Claudette, the littlest cherub in the heavenly chorus, to Miss Burry, a retired schoolteacher who is invited to Government House for Christmas. Armour has a gift for telling stories and, on occasion, inserts a parable for good measure. By sharing his experiences of Christmas traditions and emotions, readers cannot help but reflect on their own faith at Christmas.

These delightful tales are humorous, down-to-earth and gently poke fun at the idiosyncrasies many share. They also have a depth of meaning that points to the heart of Christmas — the proclamation of God's love in Jesus Christ. In each tale, the wonder of Christmas, its mystery and good news of great joy, is woven sensitively but obviously into the narrative.

The stories have beautiful illustrations, including some of the windows in St. Andrew and St. Paul, created by Eva Ferenczy-Reichmann, a member of the congregation. Money from the purchase of this book and its companion *CBC Christmas Sing-In* CD will be given to 16 charities. The CD (also \$20) features the best music compiled from 19 years of CBC Sing-Ins (see *News*, November

Record). This would be a wonderful gift for anyone who seeks a glimpse of hope, peace, love and joy in the ordinary events of life. Call the church's music department (514) 842-9991, Fax (514) 842-3433, E-mail: a_p@netaxis.ca.

Jean Morris is a minister of The Presbyterian Church in Canada.



Come Know My Joy: Hymns from The Book of Praise by The Singers and Players of Beaches Presbyterian Church, Toronto, \$18. Reviewed by Andrew Fullerton.

Once upon a time, "Abide With Me" was a brand-new hymn. At first, people thought it was strange and doleful. "Change and decay around in all I see ..." it famously opines. Yet, it spoke to people, even those who reacted to new hymns with suspicion! In time, the church allowed it into its storehouse of hymns-we-cannot-do-without.

Many new hymns in *The Book of Praise* (1997) will find their way into that storehouse. Their entry is now hastened by the resourceful musicians of Beaches Church in Toronto. They have produced a splendid CD recording of 24 "new" selections from that book, showing how singable these hymns can be.

The Singers and Players of Beaches Church are well-positioned to do this.

They are led by Andrew Donaldson and Donald Anderson who served as the hymn-book's co-editors. A delightful array of instruments accompanies the singing wonderfully well. Lori Gemmell's harp is especially beautiful. In fact, you'll hear no organ on this CD. But you will hear many stringed and wind instruments, with brass and percussion, too.

Too modern you say? Nonsense. Don't the musicians of Beaches Church recover the tradition of parish band or orchestra, whose gradual replacement by expensive organs Thomas Hardy lamented in *Under the Greenwood Tree*? And then there's Psalm 150.

Many selections come from traditions and regions of the world beginning to find a place in our hymnody. You'll hear a distinctly Celtic strain, for example. Korean and Native American melodies have a place, too. The music of South America and Central America flavours some hymns and there's even a New-

foundland folk tune setting for the words of I Corinthians 13.

I think the fight over "old" and "new" is childish. Too often, it's really a quarrel between "familiar" and "unfamiliar." But it's not the hymn's fault we don't know it, is it? What we call a "new" hymn may have been penned in the 12th century! What we really mean is: "It's new to me. I don't know it."

There's only one cure for that. Buy the CD. Listen to it. Then sing these hymns to God and be glad.

Andrew Fullerton is the minister of St. Andrew's Church, Stratford, Ont. He likes learning new hymns that are, in fact, very old.

Most books reviewed may be purchased through The Book Room, 50 Wynford Dr., North York, Ont. M3C 1J7. Prices include shipping and handling but not GST. Do not send payment with order. An invoice will follow. Please include name and location of congregation. Toll-free order line: 1-800-619-7301, ext. 301, E-mail: bookroom@presbyterian.ca.

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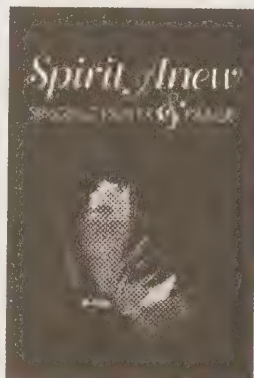
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DEATHS

LEISHMAN, HELEN M. of Brandon, Man., passed away at Brandon Regional Health Centre on Sunday, August 15, 1999. She grew up in Nova Scotia on an estate managed by her father. Completing her early education in Nova Scotia to Grade 11, she graduated from Normal School. She received her deaconess training at Ewart College, Toronto. After graduation, she travelled west and served as a deaconess in various small towns and taught at the Indian residential school in Kenora, Ont., where she met her husband. She was a life member of the WMS Brandon Presbyterian, Southenders and Park Avenue Seniors. She never stopped learning, receiving her Grade 12 certificate at the age of 54 and continuing to take university courses. She loved to read and enjoyed writing stories and poems.

She will be lovingly remembered by daughters Ellen Pichie and Edna Pealche of Brandon; Sheila of Germany; Elizabeth of Altona, Man.; Margaret Leishman of Brandon; Iris of Deloraine, Man. There are 17 grandchildren, 13 great-grandchildren, two brothers and three sisters, numerous nieces and nephews.

A service of remembrance was held in First Presbyterian Church, Brandon, August 19, with Rev. Dale Woods officiating.

SLAVIK, REV. FRANK, BA, BD., M.Th., passed away suddenly in his 85th year on Thursday, July 1, 1999, at the Toronto East General Hospital. Beloved husband of Adele, father and father-in-law of Ron and Donna, cherished grandfather of Shantal and Shane.

Born in Hungary in 1914, Frank Slavik came to Canada when he was 17. After various careers, he entered Knox College at the University of Toronto where he distinguished himself as an outstanding student. After graduating in 1951, he worked as an ordained missionary for three years in the Barrie, Ontario, area: Oro Station, Oro Central and Guthrie. Because of his gifts in ministry and his skills in encouraging and motivating people, the Presbyterian Church asked him to serve as an extension minister, building new churches in suburban Toronto. He established three churches: Albion Gardens in Etobicoke, St. Stephen's in Scarborough and St. Mark's in Mississauga. The church also called on his leadership to assist the First Hungarian

Presbyterian Church in Toronto and West Flamboro Church, Ont. For good reason, he was affectionately called "The St. Paul of the Presbyterian Church."

And he said unto them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (Matthew 4:19).

WOTHERSPOON, REV. DR. PETER C., went to be with his Lord on October 23, 1999.

Peter Wotherspoon was born in 1919 and immigrated to Canada from Scotland in 1930 with his parents and two brothers. He completed elementary and high school studies in Toronto. After one year at the University of Toronto, he was sent out by the Presbyterian Board of Missions to Three Hills, Alberta, to minister to a three-point charge. There, he also met his wife-to-be, Carol Harte, and they were married in July 1942 before he went overseas with the Royal Canadian Air Force. After four years of service, he returned to Alberta and finished his bachelor of arts program at the University of Alberta. During this time, he was also a student minister at Westmount Church, Edmonton.

Dr. Wotherspoon spent the following three years at Knox College, Toronto. After completing theological studies there and receiving ordination, he went to Edinburgh to pursue doctoral studies at New College; in 1953, he was granted his doctorate. That same year he was appointed as minister at Willowdale, Edwell and Valley Centre churches near Red Deer, Alberta. In January 1957, he received a call from St. Martin's Church, Ottawa. He accepted, and he and Carol began a new extension church in the Ottawa suburbs. In 1959, a new church building was dedicated and, in 1968, the congregation amalgamated with St. David's Church to form St. David and St. Martin Church which Dr. Wotherspoon served until his retirement in 1984.

During his ministry and after retirement, he served as clerk of presbytery for 15 years. He served on many of the committees and boards of the General Assembly, synod and presbytery and took an active part in the life of the church in the Ottawa Presbytery. On retirement, he was made minister emeritus of St. David and St. Martin Church.

HACKER, MAE, RN, in her 96th year, in Midland, Ont., Tuesday, June 29, 1999. Mae attended Knox Church, Midland, for 77

years; was active in the WA, WMS, Bible study groups; and became our first woman elder in the 1970s. Mae was a woman of faith, good nature, humour and wisdom, and she is missed by the Knox family.

JEFFERY, AUDREY, faithful member and elder of St. Andrew's, Cobourg, Ont., and life member of the WMS, died Sept. 12, 1999.

JEWELL, OLIVE EILEEN, lifelong member of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Bolsover, Ont. Passed away after a lengthy illness on Sept. 29, 1999, at Ross Memorial Hospital, Lindsay, Ont.

KING, MURIEL, age 78, lifelong member, session member since 1971, Rockwood Presbyterian Church, Rockwood, Ont., died Oct. 15, 1999.

MCCORMACK, MARION, faithful member for 75 years, choir member, member of women's groups, Alexandra, Brantford, Ont., Oct. 30, 1999.

McLAREN, ISABEL, 80, faithful member, elder, teacher, leader of St. Stephen's Presbyterian Church, Ottawa, died Oct. 25, 1999.

MITCHELL, CATHERINE "KITTY," member for 28 years of Knox, Welland, Ont., June 27. A "Scottish lass" missed by all.

MORGAN, ROBERT K., lifetime member, elder and board of managers, St. Andrew's, Clinton, Ont., died Aug. 30, 1999.

NORMAN, ISOBEL, faithful member for 58 years, past choir member, past church secretary, member of women's group (WOA), Alexandra, Brantford, Ont., Oct. 10, 1999.

PEACOCK, FRANK, died on July 23, 1999, at the age of 93. Frank was a lifelong member of Omagh Presbyterian Church, Milton, Ont. He served the congregation well in many capacities. Frank was an active member of the session for 50 years up until the time of his death.

RUNDLE, VERA MARGUERITE, 93, faithful member, St. John's Presbyterian Church, Port Perry, Ont., Sept. 26, 1999.

ORDINATIONS

Hwang, Rev. Timothy, Chambit Church, Montreal, Oct. 24.

Kerr, Rev. Susan Katherine, Knox's Galt, Cambridge, Ont., Oct. 24.

INDUCTIONS and RECOGNITIONS

Bigelow, Rev. Cam, St. Andrew's-Knox, Fort Erie, Ont., Sept. 12.

Carter, Rev. Christopher H., St. Andrew's, King City, Ont., Sept. 19.

The Transitions column welcomes announcements of special events such as births, marriages, anniversaries, baptisms and the reception of new members, as well as death notices. The rate is 90 cents per word or \$43 per column inch (the lower amount) plus GST.

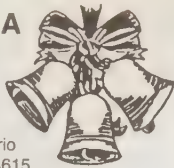
All notices of pulpits vacancies, recognitions, ordinations and inductions will be charged to congregations: \$10 for the basic notice and 90 cents per word for additional information. (There will be no charge to congregations on the Every Home or Club 50 plans.)

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TRANSITIONS

Cleland, Rev. Sylvia, West Point Grey Church, Vancouver, Sept. 12.

Dawes, Rev. Wayne, Knox's Galt, Cambridge, Ont., Nov. 28.

Hwang, Rev. Timothy, Chambit Church, Montreal, Oct. 24.

McAvoy, Rev. Carolyn (interim minister), St. Giles, Cambridge, Ont., Nov. 7.

Tait-Katerberg, Rev. Diane (assistant minister), St. John's Church, White Rock, B.C., July 18.

Whitson, Rev. Mary, North Pelham, Rockway, Ont., Oct. 24.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES and INTERIM MODERATORS

Synod of the Atlantic Provinces

Bathurst, N.B., St. Luke's. Rev. John Crawford, 7 Hierihy Rd., Tabusintac, N.B. E9H 1Y5.

Little Narrows, N.S.; Whycocomagh, St. Andrew's. Rev. R. Ritchie Robinson, Site 12, Box 4, RR 1, Bras d'Or, N.S. B0C 1B0.

Lower Sackville, N.S., First Sackville. Rev. Cynthia Chenard, Box 2554, Dartmouth, N.S. B2W 4B7.

Merigomish, N.S., St. Paul's; French River. Rev. Charles McPherson, Box 132, Stellarton, N.S. B0K 1S0.

New Glasgow, N.S., Westminster. Rev. Glenn Cooper, Box 1078, Westville, N.S. B0K 2A0.

St. John's, Nfld., St. David's. Rev. Ian S. Wishart, 5 Chestnut Place, St. John's, Nfld. A1B 2T1.

Springhill, N.S., St. David's; Oxford, St. James; Riverview, St. Andrew's. Rev. Mark McLennan, RR 2, Scotsburn, N.S. B0K 1R0.

Synod of Quebec and Eastern Ontario

Beaconsfield, Que., Briarwood. Rev. Glynis Williams, Action Réfugiés Montreal, 1410 Guy, Montreal, Que. H3H 2L7.

Beauharnois, Que., St. Edward's; Valleyfield, Valleyfield Church (part time). Search Committee, 79 St. Georges St., Beauharnois, Que. J6N 1Y9.

Dunvegan, Ont., Kenyon; Kirk Hill, St. Columba. Rev. Edward O'Neill, Box 7, Maxville, Ont. K0C 1T0.

Fort-Coulonge, Que., St. Andrew's; Bristol, Bristol Memorial. Rev. Ruth Syme, Box 1983, Deep River, Ont. K0J 1P0.

Ingleside, Ont., St. Matthew's (part time). Rev. Ian MacMillan, 18220 S. Branch Rd., Cornwall, Ont. K6H 5R6.

Iroquois, Knox; Cardinal, St. Andrew's and St. James. Rev. Ian MacLean, PO Box 94, Prescott, Ont. K0E 1T0.

Lachute, Que., Margaret Rodger Memorial. Rev. William Klempa, 372 Roslyn Ave., Westmount, Que. H3Z 2L6; wklempp@po-box.mcgill.ca.

Montreal, Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul. Rev. J.C. McLelland, 121 Alston Rd., Pointe-Claire, Que. H9R 3E2.

Montreal, Knox Crescent Kensington and First. Rev. Richard Topping, 3415 Redpath St., Montreal, Que. H3G 2G2.

Montreal, Korean. Rev. John Kim, 298 Rudar Rd., Mississauga, Ont. L5A 1S3.

Pierrefonds, Que., Westminster (part time). Rev. James Douglas, 1345 Lapointe, St. Laurent, Que. H4L 1K5.

Synod of Toronto and Kingston

Arthur, St. Andrew's; Gordonville, St. Andrew's. Rev. J. Johnson, Box 133, Drayton, Ont. N0G 1P0; 519-343-3201.

Ashburn, Burns. Rev. Andrew Allison, Box 138, Leaskdale, Ont. L0C 1C0; 905-852-1171; leaskdalepres@interhop.net.

Aurora, St. Andrew's. Rev. Helen Smith, PO Box 309, Station B, Toronto, Ont. M5T 2W2; rh.smith@home.com.

Bermuda, Hamilton, St. Andrew's. Rev. Nora Gorham, 69 Rowanwood Ave., Toronto, Ont. M4W 1Y8.

Bolton, Caven. Rev. Issa A. Saliba, 9846 Keele St., Box 5097, Maple, Ont. L6A 1R6.

Bowmanville, St. Andrew's. Rev. David McBride, PO Box 311, Port Hope, Ont. L1A 3W4.

Brampton, St. Andrew's. Rev. Peter Barrow, 38 Edith St., Georgetown, Ont. L7G 3B1.

Collingwood, First (associate minister). Search Committee, 200 Maple St., Collingwood, Ont. L9Y 2R2.

Guelph, Knox. Rev. Linda Bell, 2 Cross St., Elmira, Ont. N3B 2S5.

Kitchener, Calvin. Rev. Angus Sutherland, Central Presbyterian Church, Queen's Square, Cambridge, Ont. N1S 1H4.

Kitchener, St. Andrew's. Rev. Murray Laurenson, 360 Tower St. N, Fergus, Ont. N1M 2N7.

Mount Forest, St. Andrew's; Conn, Knox. Rev. Calvin Lewis, Box 981, Harriston, Ont. N0G 1Z0.

Nobleton, St. Paul's. Rev. Sam Priestley, 143 Main St. N, Markham, Ont. L3P 1Y2.

Oakville, Knox Sixteen. Rev. Wayne Baswick, 36 Campbell Dr., Brampton, Ont. L6X 2H7; 905-456-1727.

Parry Sound, St. Andrew's. Rev. Raye Brown, 1 High St., Huntsville, Ont. P1H 1P2.

Sutton West, St. Andrew's. Rev. Margaret Robertson, 50 Wynford Dr., Toronto, Ont. M3C 1J7; 416-441-1111; mroberts@presbyterian.ca.

Toronto, All People (Mahn-Min). Rev. In Kee Kim, 3625 Haven Glenn, Mississauga, Ont. L4X 1X7.

Toronto, Gateway Community. Rev. Robert Syme, 19 Queensbury Ave., Toronto, Ont. M1N 2X8.

Toronto, Grace (Etobicoke). Rev. William Adamson, 299 Mill Rd. #902, Etobicoke, Ont. M9C 4V9.

Toronto, Knox (Spadina). Rev. Bob Fourney, 1 Glenview Ave., Toronto, Ont. M4R 1P5.

Toronto, Patterson. Rev. Gordon Fish, 15 Lambeth Rd., Toronto, Ont. M9A 2Y6.

Toronto, Weston. Rev. Clyde Irvine, 15 Lambeth Rd., Toronto, Ont. M9A 2Y6.

Tweed, St. Andrew's. Rev. Chen-Chen Abbott, Box 118, Stirling, Ont. K0K 3E0.

TRANSITIONS

Whitby, St. Andrew's. Rev. Douglas Roll-
wage, 140 Guildwood Pkwy., Toronto, Ont.
M1E 1P4.

Synod of Southwestern Ontario

Ailsa Craig, Ailsa Craig Church. Rev. John
Bannerman, 342 Pond Mills Rd., London,
Ont. N5Z 3X5; 519-681-7242.

Blenheim, Blenheim Church (half-time). Rev.
Evelyn Carpenter, 60 Fifth St., Chatham,
Ont. N7M 4V7.

Brantford, Alexandra. Rev. Mark B. Gaskin,
97 Wellington St., Brantford, Ont. N3T
2M1; (519) 752-4932; cpc@bfree.on.ca.

Crinan, Argyle; Largie, Duff's. Rev. Jennifer
Cameron, RR 2, Glencoe, Ont. N0L 1M0.

Delhi, Calvin; Brantford, Pleasant Ridge.
Rev. Warren McKinnon, 619 Northdale Dr.,
Woodstock, Ont. N4S 5K7.

Forest, St. James. Rev. Joop Eenkhorn, 311
Michigan Ave., Point Edward, Ont. N7V 1G1.

Glencoe, Glencoe Church; Wardsville, St.
John's. Rev. Kathryn Strachan, PO Box 72,
Appin, Ont. N0L 1A0.

Hagersville, St. Andrew's; Port Dover, Knox.
Rev. Thomas G. Vais, 117 Argyle St. N,
Caledonia, Ont. N3W 1B8.

Ilderton, Bethel. Rev. Keith McKee, 1475
Dundas St., London, Ont. N5W 3B8.

Komoka; North Caradoc. Rev. Dennis
Carrothers, 901-700 Wonderland Rd. N,
London, Ont. N6H 4V3.

London, Westmount. Rev. Karen Timbers,
370 Ridout St., London, Ont. N6C 3Z7;
gkmstim@execulink.com.

Markdale, Cooke's; Feversham, Burn's. Mr.
Rick Eidenmueller, RR 6, Markdale, Ont.
N0C 1H0.

Meaford, Knox. Rev. Bill Vanderstelt, Box
86, Chatsworth, Ont. N0H 1G0.

Petrolia, St. Andrew's; Dawn, Knox. Rev.
Philip Wilson, PO Box 1381, Corunna, Ont.
N0N 1G0.

Port Elgin, Tolmie Memorial; Burgoyne,
Knox. Rev. Ted Creen, 865 Second Ave.
W, Owen Sound, Ont. N4K 4M6.

Sarnia, St. Andrew's. Rev. Thomas Rodger,
120 S. Russell St., Sarnia, Ont. N7T 3L1.

Thamesville, St. James; Duart. Rev. Mary
Templer, Box 93, Dresden, Ont. N0P 1M0.

Tiverton, Knox. Rev. Peggy Kinsman, Box
219, Lucknow, Ont. N0G 2H0.

Windsor, Knox. Rev. W. Scott McAndless,
58 Erie St. S, Leamington, Ont. N8H 3B1.

Synod of Manitoba and Northwestern Ontario

Flin Flon, St. Andrew's (half-time, ordained
minister). Rev. Margaret Mullin, 1405 Van
Horne Ave., Brandon, Man. R7A 1E4;
phone/fax: 204-727-4414; mullinm@
mb.sympatico.ca.

Full-time regional staff position. Rev. Jean Bry-
den, Search Committee Convener, 808-9th
St. NW, Portage la Prairie, Man. R1N 3L3.

Thunder Bay, Ont., Calvin. Rev. Joanne R.
MacOdrum, Box 342, Geraldton, Ont.
P0T 1M0.

Thunder Bay, Ont., First. Rev. Bert Vancook,
207 South Brodie St., Thunder Bay, Ont.,
P7E 1C1.

Winnipeg, St. Andrew's-Calvin (joint charge
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waard, 341 Eveline St. at McLean Ave.,
Selkirk, Man. R1A 1M9; 204-482-6425.

Synod of Alberta

Calgary, Grace (senior minister as of Febru-
ary 1, 2000). Rev. Brown Milne, 10 Var-
mour Pl. NW, Calgary, Alta. T3A 0A1;
milnejb@cadvision.com; Web site:
www.grace.calgary.ab.ca.

Edmonton, Westmount. Rev. Bruce Kemp,
6104 - 148 St., Edmonton, Alta. T6H 4Z5;
bkemp1@telusplanet.net; Fax: 780-
439-1676.

Lethbridge, St. Andrew's. Rev. Don Hill,
1818 - 5 Avenue S, Lethbridge, Alta.
T1J 0W6; dhill@mox.ab.ca.

Synod of British Columbia

Sooke, Knox. Rev. John Allan, 680 Courtney
St., Victoria, B.C. V8W 1C1.

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Briefly noted

Deaths: *Joan Hamilton*, mother of
Terrie-Lee Hamilton, senior adminis-
trator of the General Assembly office,
Nov. 2; *Barbara Woodruff*, former
program secretary of the WMS,
Nov. 3.

Comings: *Mark and Pamela Young*
and family from Malawi, in December;
Bruce Hickling from Malawi, in January.

Goings: *Jonathan Sherbino*, to
Malawi, Nov. 19; *Heather Jones*, to
Malawi, Dec. 18; *Michael and Wendy*
Lessard-Clouston and family, to
Japan, Dec. 28; *Joy Randall*, to
Taiwan, Jan. 12.

Published: *Kathy Cawsey*, *Presby-*
terian Record columnist and contribu-
tor, on the *Globe and Mail's* Facts and
Arguments page, Nov. 2, 1999.

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John, others and
the Stone of
Destiny point to
this immediate
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many Reformed
Church Notables
such as John
Knox & Thomas
Chalmers. Also
toasts Robbie
Burns and Saint
Patrick.

A Child's Way

A page to share with the children you love

Written by Karen Timbers,
minister of Elmwood Avenue
Church, London, Ont.

Illustration by Claudio Ghirardo

A Child Is Born

Scripture Readings: Luke 2:1-20, Matthew 2:1-12

Study the Scripture texts above and circle True or False for each of the following:

- T F There were three Magi from the East who visited Jesus.
- T F First one angel and then a host of angels appeared to the shepherds.
- T F Jesus did not cry.
- T F The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John all tell about Jesus' birth.
- T F Mary and Joseph had to go to Bethlehem to be registered by the government.
- T F The Magi presented gifts of gold, frankincense and myrtle.
- T F The Magi followed the stars to find the place where Jesus was born.
- T F Jesus was born in Nazareth.

Prayer

Jesus, you came as a tiny
baby just like me.

Help me to grow up to be
an adult just like you.

Amen.

Find the seven errors in this picture of Jesus' birth.



A note to adults reading this page:

Unfortunately, there are so many traditions that have built up around Jesus' birth story, children experience difficulty knowing what Scripture actually describes. These extra traditions are not wrong, but children deserve the truth. Help them to treasure the real story in all its beauty.

The Festival of Lights

Betty Worthington

On the third Sunday in Advent, our congregation lit the Candle of Joy. It reminded us of the joy the birth of our Saviour brings. We sang hymns of praise for the tiny baby born so long ago in Bethlehem.

Two days later, I took a step even further back in time. For more than 2,100 years, Jewish people have gathered with their families to celebrate the victory of Judah Maccabees and his followers over the Syrian army. When they reclaimed Jerusalem, their first task was to repair and cleanse the Temple. They removed the Greek altar and pagan idols, then decorated the Temple with golden crowns and shields. A new menorah was made and illuminated. They found only one small cruse of oil, enough oil for one day. But a miracle happened. It burned for eight days!

People crowded into the Temple to celebrate and honour this miracle. All over the world, even today, Jews celebrate Hanukkah, the Festival of Lights, by lighting eight candles and distributing Hanukkah gelt (coins) to the children. I wonder, did Mary and Joseph ever take Jesus, as a child, from Nazareth in Galilee to Bethlehem, the city of David in Judaea, to celebrate there with his family? We know Joseph was of the house and lineage of David.

I was invited to attend the welcoming of the Sabbath service in the new synagogue at Sunnybrook Health Science Centre, Toronto. About 50 people crowded into the small chapel for the solemn and moving service; seven were women. The service was printed in Hebrew with English translations. The historic words of the Old Testament were sung and chanted in Hebrew. The ancient words, recited in deep male voices,

filled me with awe. Joseph and Jesus must have sung these same words and lit their own candles in a menorah. I looked up at the beautiful stained glass windows pointing the way to Israel. I was overwhelmed with emotion.

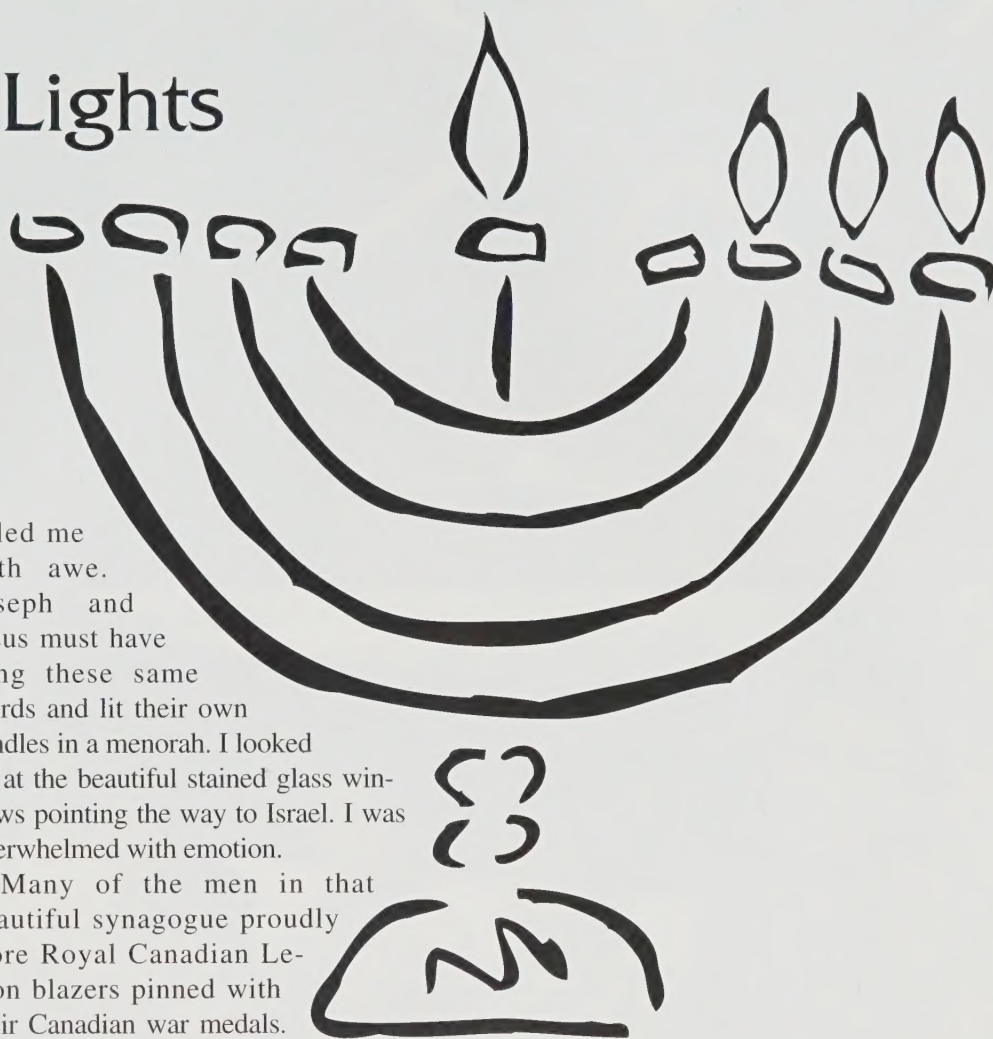
Many of the men in that beautiful synagogue proudly wore Royal Canadian Legion blazers pinned with their Canadian war medals. Some were in wheelchairs

or had walkers or canes. Tears came to my eyes. I was in the midst of living history — from ancient times to these troubled modern times.

After the service, we gathered in the large auditorium. There were nine at our table. We were a family — not a family of blood, but a family sharing in the care of veterans of war who had been broken and were hospitalized. We played with small, gold-coloured dreidles as children in Israel did so long ago. I

wonder, did Joseph, a carpenter, make one of these spinning tops for Jesus and his friends? Did he make the family menorah in his workshop? How did Mary prepare her Hanukkah feast?

The auditorium was colourfully decorated for the celebrations. The five-foot menorah was presented by the General Wingate branch of the Royal Canadian Legion and dedicated by the rabbi. Three candles were lit.



Hanukkah gives new meaning to Christmas

The joyous festivities of Hanukkah began. A trio of musicians filled the hall with traditional Israeli music. Strong men danced together; men, women and children danced. We sang songs in Hebrew, Yiddish and English. This was not *Fiddler on the Roof*, but we experienced the joyous happiness of that wedding feast. I wonder, did Jesus and his friends dance the horah, too? How did they celebrate the miracle of Hanukkah?

Food and wine was supplied in abundance. Crispy hot potato latkes served with applesauce, fancy breads and fillings, and lots of jelly doughnuts are the traditional foods.

I will cherish this night in my memory. The Jewish Festival of Lights gave new meaning to Jesus' nativity for me. At our church, we prepared to light the fourth candle of Advent and celebrate the birth of Jesus, our Lord. **R**

Betty Worthington is a member of Trinity York Mills Church in Toronto.

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